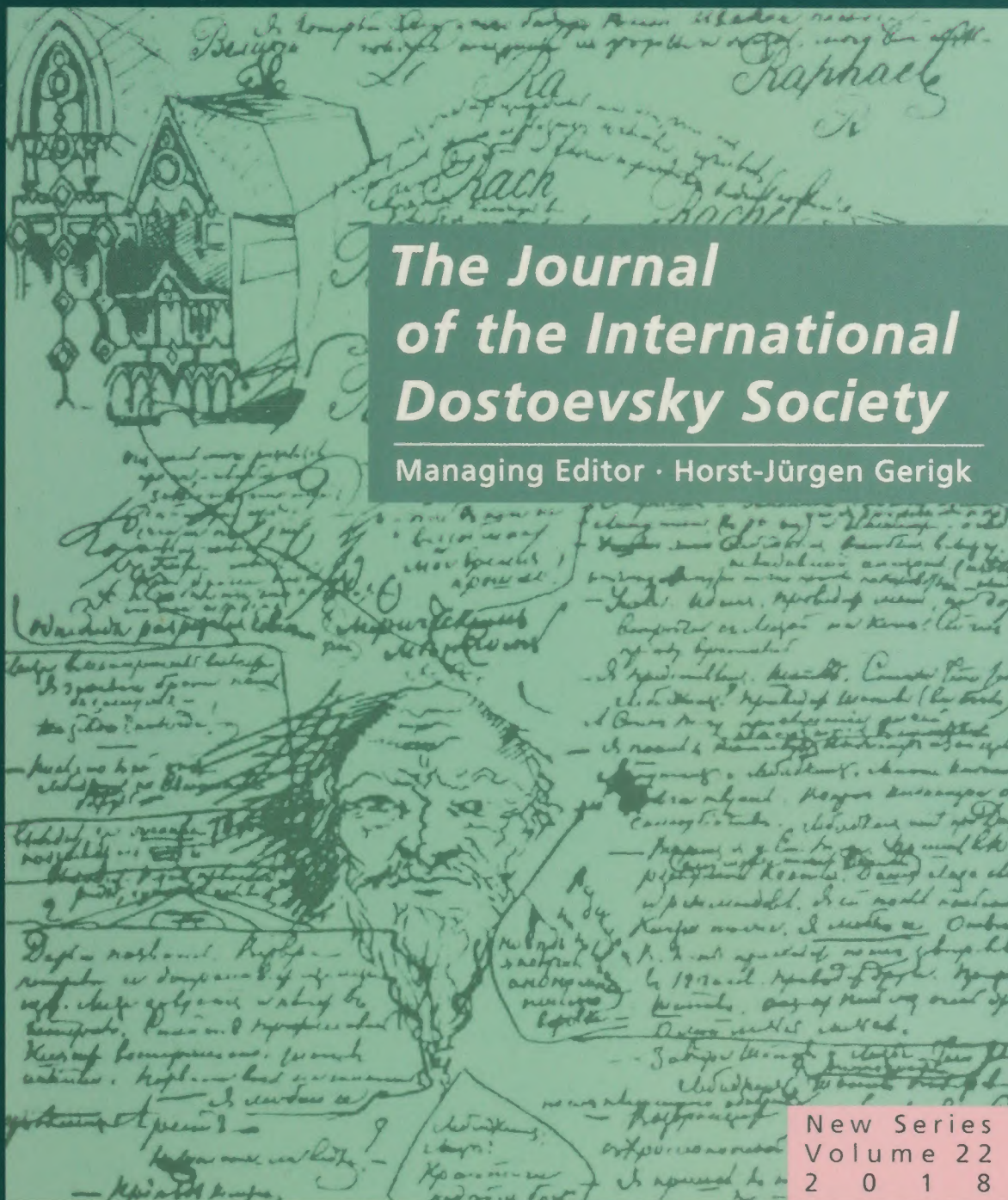


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This volume is dedicated to Prof. Dr. Horst-Jürgen Gerigk as he retires from the position of Managing Editor-in-Chief of *Dostoevsky Studies*.

For over forty years, the International Dostoevsky Society and the journal have benefited from Prof. Dr. Gerigk's academic acumen, general wisdom, and good humor. We are particularly grateful for his past twenty years service as the journal's Managing Editor-in-Chief, a post he assumed during his term as President of the International Dostoevsky Society (1998-2004).

Horst-Jürgen, we will miss your wise counsel and unfailing fairness.



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ARTICLES ♦ AUFSÄTZE

MALCOLM V. JONES AND WILLIAM MILLS TODD III

The University of Nottingham / Harvard University

A Letter to the Editorial Board of *Dostoevsky Studies*

We read with great interest Professor Rudolf Neuhäuser's informative account of the Society's history 'from the Beginnings to the End of its Existence as an Independent Voluntary Organization' in *Dostoevsky Studies* 21. Having been involved with the society from its very conception, and having tirelessly contributed to its work in so many ways, Professor Neuhäuser is in a unique position to provide information that would otherwise be unavailable to us.

However, any such account is likely to be strongly influenced by personal memories and encounters, and by what may have survived in the form of documentary evidence in the possession of the author.

As members of the International Dostoevsky Society ourselves, some of us long-standing, some of us more recent, we think it is important to make clear to readers of *Dostoevsky Studies* and to future historians of the Society that, together with invaluable personal testimony, Professor Neuhäuser's article contains what to many will seem significant errors and omissions, together with some highly partisan and incomplete accounts of certain key episodes in the Society's history.

Some of these errors are easily corrected. The 1986 Symposium, for example, was held not in Norwich but at the University of Nottingham (p. 34). Other errors require more clarification. They relate to Professor Neuhäuser's contention that by establishing a bank account in Switzerland and adapting a new constitution, the IDS forfeited its exemplary commitment to the serious study of Dostoevsky by well-qualified specialists (p. 21).

We believe that an impartial examination of recent volumes of *Dostoevsky Studies* will show that not only have the quality of the journal's offerings remained excellent, but they have been written by a wide range of scholars. That present and past issues of the journal are available on line with their articles, reviews of new monographs, and superb annual

bibliographies by Ms. June Pachuta Farris testifies to the Society's continuing commitment to fostering and disseminating excellent research.

Debates over the future of the Society are by no means a phenomenon of the twenty-first century. Some of us will remember the heated discussions in our general assemblies of 1983 (Cerisy-La-Salle) and 1986 (Nottingham), discussions fueled by East-West antagonisms of the time, but resolved amicably and now important as momentary growing pains as our Society expanded in membership and in the scope of its scholarship. Becoming a legal organization with its own Swiss bank account was a prerequisite for us to apply for and receive the grants that make our work possible. Our Constitution, ratified by the General Assembly at the Naples Symposium (2010), has clarified our organizational procedures and made them accessible to all our members.

By the late 1990s email communication came to replace Professor Nadine Natov's wonderful mimeographed announcements with her handwritten notes to each of us. We have ample email records from this new age of communication, and they show active conversations between many of us, old and new members alike, concerning our organization, potential sites for symposia, possible new officers, and a new constitution.

We are particularly concerned that readers might be led to misjudge the outstanding contribution to the work of the Society of one of its Honorary Presidents, Professor Deborah Martinsen of Columbia University. Her tireless efforts for the IDS, firstly as Treasurer and then as President, saw it move successfully into the twenty-first century. Her term ended with one of its greatest successes, the Moscow Symposium, followed by the first Symposium to be held in Spain. The Society is solvent and a new generation of members is involved in the Society's programmes and administration. It is largely thanks to the visionary leadership of Professor Martinsen and those who have worked with her over the years that this success has been achieved.

(in alphabetical order)

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ERIC NAIMAN

University of California, Berkeley

Gospel Rape

Sonia Marmeladova's reading of the Lazarus story to Raskolnikov has long been regarded as one of the crucial scenes in *Crime and Punishment*.¹ Marking the beginning of Raskolnikov's own, slow path towards confession and rebirth, the scene seems to be a triumph for the power of the Gospel. It has also been read more recently as a welcome moment in which Sonia, hitherto a woman disgraced and almost entirely silenced, finds her voice and assumes a position of pastoral power.²

No admirer of Dostoevsky, Vladimir Nabokov took special umbrage at this scene, which he regarded as "the flaw, the crack" in the novel that "causes the edifice to crumble ethically and esthetically."³ He was particularly disdainful of the reading's conclusion, which contained a

¹ Tat'iana Kasatkina has recently written that "It is as though the text from the Gospel shapes around itself the structurally similar text of the novel." *Священное в повседневном: двусоставный образ в произведениях Ф. М. Достоевского* (Moscow: IMLI RAN, 2015): 187.

² Elizabeth Blake stresses the importance of Sonia's recovering her voice and occupying a more discursively powerful position that culminates in the epilogue. "Sonya. Silent No More: A response to the Woman Question in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*," *Slavic and East European Journal* 50.2 (2006): 252–271, pp. 263–8. Dennis Patrick Slattery sees the scene as representing the triumph of orality over print culture. "From Silence to Sound: Sonia as Redemptive Muse in *Crime and Punishment*," *Dostoevsky Studies* 2–6 (1994–1998): 19–34, pp. 20, 32. Boris Tikhomirov, on the other hand, stresses how infrequently Sonia speaks towards the end of the novel, and emphasizes the growing importance of her gaze rather than her voice. "Из творческой истории романа Ф. М. Достоевского *Преступление и наказание* (Соня Мармеладова и Порфирий Петрович)," *Русская литература* 4 (1990): 217–223, pp. 219–21. Valentina Izmirlieva interprets the Lazarus reading as an act of Christian "radical hospitality" and as a transformative and redemptive "scandal." "Hosting the Divine Logos: Radical Hospitality and Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*," *The Routledge Companion to Literature and Religion*, ed. Mark Knight, (London: Routledge, 2006): 277–88.

³ Vladimir Nabokov, *Lectures on Russian Literature*, ed. Fredson Bowers (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981): 110.

“singular sentence” “so crude and so inartistic” that “for sheer stupidity [it] has hardly the equal in world-famous literature”: “The candle was flickering out, dimly lighting up in the poverty-stricken room the murderer and the harlot who had been reading together the eternal book.”⁴ Nabokov explained the basis for his contempt:

I suggest that neither a true artist nor a true moralist – neither a good Christian nor a good philosopher – neither a poet nor a sociologist – should have placed side by side, in one breath, in one gust of false eloquence, a killer together with whom? – a poor streetwalker, bending their completely different heads over that holy book. The Christian God, as understood by those who believe in the Christian God, has pardoned the harlot nineteen centuries ago. The killer, on the other hand, must be first of all examined medically. [...] Moreover, look at the absence of artistic balance. We have been shown Raskolnikov’s crime in all sordid detail and we also have been given half a dozen different explanations for his exploit. We have never been shown Sonya in the exercise of her trade. The situation is a glorified cliché. The harlot’s sin is taken for granted. Now I submit that the true artist is the person who never takes anything for granted.⁵

Nabokov defends Sonia’s honor, or, at least, he defends her from a certain accusatory notion of honor, but one senses here an odd regret that Sonia is never caught in the act, a wish that her sin might be more openly displayed. Prurient desire lurks at the edges of just about every English sentence written by Nabokov – if it does not cavort at the center – but in this case, an author who was a master of the double-entendre seems to have missed the erotic undercurrent running beneath this scene, which shares, as the following pages will endeavor to show, many of the attributes of a sex scene after all. The scene, moreover, is part of a dynamic in this novel – and other works by Dostoevsky – in which libidinal energy is displaced onto texts, and where the most strenuous, and occasionally the most shattering acts of intercourse, are those in which characters read aloud.

In many respects, the argument I will unfold is intended as both a tribute to and an argument with Carol Apollonio’s *Dostoevsky’s Secrets: Reading Against the Grain*. This is a book that shakes our faith in what we thought we knew about one of our most canonical authors. Apollonio focuses on the violent nature of language in Dostoevsky’s fiction: “The truly dangerous dynamic in his works has to do with acts of language: a

⁴ Nabokov (1981): 110.

⁵ Nabokov (1981): 110–113.

slander can ruin a reputation as easily as an actual crime.”⁶ Her book is in one respect a forensic treatise: its fundamental task is the exoneration of figures whom we have come to see as Dostoevsky’s villains: Bykov in the early epistolary novel, *Poor Folk*, and Svidrigailov in *Crime and Punishment*. Seizing on textual evidence, she attempts to get these figures off the moral hooks on which they have been twisting for a century and a half in Russian literature’s canonical inferno. At the same time, however, she must impugn the character of other characters, whose veracity has been accepted up until now. “If their love is innocent,” she asks, discussing *Poor Folk*’s young couple, Varen’ka and Pokrovskii, “why all the guilt and torment?”; “After all, what is [Nastenka, the heroine of the story “White Nights”] doing out there in a place dangerous for young ladies, a place where no decent young lady would allow herself to go, at night, with predators about, if not in the hopes of meeting a man?”⁷ As a result, a book which sees as its mission the drawing of attention to the immorality of slander in Dostoevsky’s fiction ends up calling into question the veracity of virtually any utterance.

Paradoxically, Raskolnikov’s despicable would-be brother-in-law, Luzhin, is the character most associated with the crucial tool – innuendo – that *Dostoevsky’s Secrets* both attacks and uses to exculpate. In a scene that follows soon after the one dealing with the raising of Lazarus, Luzhin makes fun of his protégé, Lebeziatnikov, who is trying to delineate for him the contours of a commune he is forming and the place Sonia Marmeladova would have in it. “I’m continuing to develop [Sonia].” Lebeziatnikov says, “She has a beautiful, beautiful nature!” “So you’re finding a use for this beautiful nature, eh? Heh, heh!” Luzhin responds, with a lawyer’s knack for attacking a narrative. “And of course you’re developing her ... heh, heh! ... by proving to her that all modesties are nonsense?” “Not at all! Not at all! Oh, how crudely, even stupidly [...] you understand the word development” (370; 6:283–4).⁸ Luzhin is a negative figure, but he is doing Dostoevsky’s ideological work for him, mocking the plans of the socialists in indecent, leering terms from which the author can distance himself. In other words, we should understand this aggressive, sniggering mode of

⁶ Carol Apollonio, *Dostoevsky’s Secrets: Reading Against the Grain* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2009): 20.

⁷ Apollonio (2009): 23, 33.

⁸ All quotations of *Crime and Punishment* are to the Pevear and Volokhonsky translation. Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (New York: Vintage, 1993). The page numbers will be given in text, followed by the volume and page number in Dostoevsky’s *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v tridsati tomakh*. 30 vols. (Leningrad: Nauka, 1972–90). The original Russian will be provided in the text when necessary.

interpretive response as something Dostoevsky makes ideological use of, not unlike the use Lebeziatnikov may be planning to make of Sonia.

Let's stay with this scene for another minute. Luzhin calls in Sonia from the next room – she has arrived for her father's funeral feast in the large apartment where both he and the remainder of her family have taken rooms. During the encounter, he covertly slips a 100 ruble note into her pocket and then, in front of the assembled guests, accuses her of having stolen it. Her pockets are turned inside out, and the bill flutters to the ground.

Truth prevails – Lebeziatnikov has seen Luzhin slip the bill into Sonia's pocket, and so Luzhin's attempt to attempt to expose Sonia as a thief exposes her as virtuous, although the erotic charge of exposure still hovers over the scene. The role of Katerina Ivanovna in producing the money – she forcibly yanks out the pockets – unwittingly echoes her part in Sonia's initial foray into prostitution; here Katerina Ivanovna acts the part of a madam, opening up Sonia for all to see. Apollonio rightly describes the insertion of money in Sonia's pocket as “deeply sexual in nature.”⁹ The same is true for the bill's removal from Sonia's pocket: a literal money shot that eventually exposes Sonia's honesty but exposes her nonetheless. As Apollonio points out, however, we don't actually *know* that Sonia is innocent, and Apollonio allows innuendo to flicker for a moment before snuffing it out:

How do we know she did not take the money? Without the reader's *faith* in Sonia's virtue (and of course, by analogy, religious faith), there can be no transfiguration and we remain in a dark and fallen world dominated by the deadly sins. To us, this faith is obvious, a given; given what we know about Sonia it is impossible for us to believe her guilty. But we are in a special position. On the level of narration, Dostoevsky is playing out the drama of belief: truth is deeper than evidence, and it becomes accessible through faith.¹⁰

It is important to note that this episode provides the reader with a pattern more covertly present in the Lazarus scene – the reader experiences the frisson of symbolic violation – the money is put into and taken out of Sonia's pocket without her consent – paradoxically combined with an affirmation of faith.

In his treatment of Sonia, Luzhin in crucial respects replays something Raskolnikov has just done with her. Here it is important to note that the

⁹ Apollonio (2009): 89–90.

¹⁰ Apollonio (2009): 90–91.

men are doubles in two ways – not only because they are both erotically invested in the same two women – Dunia and Sonia – but because they are both close readers. Raskolnikov has earlier demonstrated his skill at close reading in his treatment of his mother's letter. Raskolnikov knows his mother well; it was she who taught him how to read and write, and his twisted reading of his mother's prose may well be an adequate response to her passive aggressive text. Technically, Luzhin is listening to Lebeziatnikov, not reading, but within a novel attentive listening inescapably entails paying close attention to a text. Luzhin listens "somehow too sarcastically, and most recently had even become abusive" (как-то уж слишком саркастически, а в самое последнее время — так даже стал браниться) (365; 6:280). They are both, we might say, hermeneutic abusers, particularly aggressive close readers. They demonstrate how in a book close reading can be an aggressive, erotically charged act. Indeed, as Edward Wasiolek, following the lead of W.D. Snodgrass, suggested nearly fifty years ago, the murder of the pawnbroker and her sister can be seen as the channeling of Raskolnikov's conflicted love and hostility towards his mother and, one might add, towards her letter in particular.¹¹ Were Raskolnikov not a close reader, we would have no crime and no punishment. His mother signs off with "Yours to the grave" (твоя до гроба) and Raskolnikov takes the cue (39, 6:34).

Raskolnikov's attitude towards the letter is portrayed in erotic terms. He waits to read it until the landlady's servant who has brought it to him has gone: "he wished to be left *alone* with this letter" (30, 6:27). He kisses the envelope and lingers before unsealing it. Here his reaction is autobiographical – Dostoevsky treated his brother's letters almost like love objects, answering letters with descriptions of how he had opened them:

I thank you from my soul, my dear brother, for your dear letter. [...] You wouldn't believe how I feel a sweet quivering of the heart when they bring me a letter from you: I have invented for myself a new form of pleasure – a very strange one – to torment myself. I take your letter. I turn it about several minutes in my hands. I grope it, to see if it is full-weighted, and, having looked, having lovingly feasted my eyes on the sealed envelope. I put it in my pocket ... You wouldn't believe the voluptuous state of my soul, my feelings, and my heart! And in this way, I wait sometimes a quarter of an hour; finally, I fall greedily on the packet. I rip the seal and I devour your

¹¹ Edward Wasiolek, "Raskolnikov's Motives: Love and Murder," *American Imago* 31.3 (Fall 1974): 252–69. See, also, W. D. Snodgrass, "Crime for Punishment: The Tenor of Part One," *Hudson Review* 13.2 (Summer 1960): 202–53.

lines, your dear lines. O, what my heart does not experience, reading them!
(28.1:66)

I am not suggesting that Dostoevsky had incestuous feelings for his brother, but this passage reveals the extent to which moments of reading in Dostoevsky's prose are often marked, even humorously, by sexual connotation. A similar erotic investment in texts can be seen in Raskolnikov's mother's treatment of his catastrophically mistaken article about extraordinary men: "She read his article incessantly, sometimes even aloud. She all but slept with it" (538; 6:413). Raskolnikov, though, takes things a little further: "Almost all the while he was reading, from the very beginning of the letter, Raskolnikov's face was wet with tears; but when he finished, it was pale, twisted convulsively, and a heavy, bilious, spiteful smile wandered over his lips" (Почти все время как читал Раскольников, с самого начала письма, лицо его было мокро от слез; но когда он кончил, оно был бледно, искривлено судорогой, и тяжелая, желчная, злая улыбка змеилась по его губам) (39; 6:35). The word for finish can have the same sexual connotation, when used intransitively, as the English verb "to come." The perfectly natural absence of the understood infinitive in Russian – *кончил* for *кончил читать* – *stopped* instead of *stopped reading* – permits, if it does not explicitly authorize, a sexual interpretation of the second half of the phrase.

One of the central themes of *Dostoevsky's Secrets* is that in Dostoevsky's world books represent a powerful erotic force. Apollonio demonstrates this particularly well on the basis of *Poor Folk* (22–24), where Varen'ka's accident with Pokrovskii's bookshelf restages the biblical fall as a moment of surreptitious, abortive reading. The act of reading, and of inducing someone else to read, has in Dostoevsky's first work a predatory quality. Indeed, *Poor Folk* opens with an instance of close misreading – Makar's misconstrual of the meaning of the objects on Varen'ka's window sill sets the tone right away for both his intrusiveness and his impotence. Of course, the association of reading, and in particular close reading, with sexuality and also violence, is not limited to Dostoevsky, although he manages to bring these *three* elements into particularly close conjunction. As far as sex is concerned, Western culture's most celebrated moment of eroticized reading probably occurs in Dante, even if, in the story of Paolo and Francesca, reading leads to sex rather than powerfully signifying or even replacing it. From at least the eighteenth century onward, novels were often

attacked as sexually corrupting, particularly for women,¹² and as for violence, we forget that the potential association of reading with violence was often materially present in the nineteenth century when readers had to cut pages and the book being read was often in close proximity with scissors or a knife. The knife in Anna Karenina's hand – did more prudent people cut the pages of their books before boarding their train? – becomes part of her own eroticized reading experience and will later find its way metaphorically into the hands of Vronsky, as reading, passion, and violence are bound up in one symbolic knot.

One of the most disturbing moments of abusive close reading in the history of Western literature is to be found in the pages of a novel Dostoevsky admired in his youth, Frédéric Soulié's roman-feuilleton of 1837, *Memoirs of the Devil*.¹³ The devil confers upon the novel's hero, the Baron de Luizzi, super-acute vision, and then he renders the wall of Luizzi's room transparent, so that Luizzi can gaze through it at events happening far away. In this proto-cinematic moment, the hero observes a girl imprisoned in solitary confinement. She sits at a table, reading a book and weeping. Luizzi zooms telescopically in on the title: it is the Marquis de Sade's *Justine*. His initial supposition on identifying the book – that the girl has been confined for fatal lubricity – soon gives way to doubt. How can Sade's lines produce this sort of sentimental reaction? As we would say today, perhaps she hasn't understood the signals of genre?

Certainly, her reading material had nothing sentimental about it, and if Luizzi was surprised by the book this poor girl held in her hands, he was even more surprised by the effect it produced on her. This observation led Luizzi back to the pages of this odious work, and his first astonishment was joined by an even greater one. He discerned a handwritten line underneath each printed one; the writing was all the more distinct from the printed text because it was being written in red. Luizzi, still tending towards his initial supposition, wanted to know what kind of commentary a young, beautiful woman could be supplying for this monstrous work. Thanks to the power of the vision the devil had given him, he could easily read the poorly formed

¹² This point is made by Apollonio, who relies on Thomas Laqueur's history of masturbation. Apollonio (2009): 23; Thomas W. Laqueur, *Solitary Sex: A Cultural History of Masturbation* (New York: Zone Books, 2003).

¹³ Both A.E. Rizenkamp and D.V. Grigorovich single out *Les mémoires du diable* as Dostoevsky's favorite work by Soulié. Grigorovich describes Dostoevsky as "having a passion" for Soulié's works in general and as "being delighted by *Les mémoires* in particular" (Он одно время очень пристрастился к романам Ф. Сулье, особенно восхищали его *Записки Демона*.) A. Dolinin (ed). *Ф. М. Достоевский в воспоминаниях современников*, 2 vols. (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1964), 1:114, 131.

and imperceptible letters, and here is the first phrase he deciphered: "This is my story: I write it in this book with my blood because I have no paper or ink. If I have not crossed out line by line the abominable book that a villain has placed in my hand to kill my spirit after having killed my body, if I have not effaced it – the only book I've been allowed – it is because my blood has become so scarce that I have barely enough to recount all my sorrows and demand vengeance."¹⁴

Ironically, her account goes on for *dozens* of pages, describing her own violation and subsequent imprisonment, in what amounts to a doubling – and updating – of Sade's story of a virtuous woman abused at every turn, with Luizzi's penetrative gaze, not to mention the reader's, the latest intrusion on her inner core.

It is important to keep this episode in mind when we turn to the scene in *Crime and Punishment* in which Raskolnikov *forces* Sonia to read the account of the raising of Lazarus. This scene is usually discussed for its content and its outcome – the biblical passage becomes a model for Raskolnikov's own return to life at the insistence of Sonia, who stands up to what one critic has identified as the novel's predominant element – sexual violence against women.¹⁵

To appreciate the contested poetics and ethics of the Lazarus reading, it is worthwhile reviewing the history of the scene's editing and publication. The original version of this chapter was rejected by *The Russian Messenger*, the journal that had been publishing the novel serially, and Dostoevsky was required to rewrite it.¹⁶ In a letter written shortly thereafter to the critic Aleksandr Miliukov, Dostoevsky claimed that the editors had rejected the original version because of questions of morality and because they found in it "traces of nihilism" (28.2:166). Dostoevsky's original text has been lost, but further clarification was provided by the *Russian Messenger* eight years after his death, when the journal published the letter to Miliukov along with a note, probably written by the editor Nikolai Liubimov:

From the letter, it is clear that it was not easy for Dostoevsky to renounce his exaggeratedly idealized conception of Sonia as a woman whose self-sacrifice had led her all the way to the sacrifice of her own body. Fedor Mikhailovich significantly shortened the conversation occurring around the

¹⁴ Frédéric Soulié, *Les Mémoires du diable* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 2003): 75.

¹⁵ Nina Pelikan Strauss, *Dostoevsky and the Woman Question: Rereadings at the End of a Century* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994): 23–28.

¹⁶ A summary of the struggle over the chapter is provided in the *Polnoe sobranie*. 7:323–28.

reading of the Gospel, which in its original was much longer than what remained in the published text. (7:326)

That, at least, is how the editors of the 30-volume edition of Dostoevsky's collected works cite the note, and they provide an odd gloss on it, saying that it led one Dostoevsky scholar to reach an unfounded conclusion:

V. Ia. Kirpotin, relying on the words in this note about Sonia as a "woman whose self-sacrifice had led her all the way to the sacrifice of her own body," voiced the supposition that in the excluded text of the chapter Sonia "became Raskolnikov's beloved wife." However, it seems to us that there is no basis for such an interpretation of those words. (7: 326–7)

This is an odd statement. Why quote Kirpotin if his assertion is without foundation? The claim seems to have a certain piquancy for the Russian editors of the *Complete Works*: it is as though they can't ignore it – and so they pass it on, without endorsing it, an odd bit of scholarly innuendo fully in keeping with the dynamic of slander identified by Apollonio as crucial to the novel's poetics. But there is something even odder here – you don't have to be Luzhin to see that the summary of Kirpotin's claim implies that Sonia became Raskolnikov's beloved wife right there in the room. How, one wonders, would the consummation of that union have been described? If we turn to Kirpotin's original text, his 1970 book *The Disenchantment and Downfall of Rodion Raskolnikov*, we find that he couches his supposition a little more delicately, although he does imply that it was the physical union of Sonia and Raskolnikov that Katkov, the editor of the *Russian Messenger* at the time, could not abide:

And Sonia's falling in love with Raskolnikov, her becoming his beloved, his wife, - that [would have been] absolutely indecent, it amounted to the "exaggerated idealization" that was impermissible on the pages of such as a respectable organ as the *Russian Messenger*. Otherwise there is no way to understand the words in the note, in which it is said that in Dostoevsky's text Sonia took her "self-sacrifice all the way to the sacrifice of her own body?" To whom? To Raskolnikov of course, because it was already clear from the preceding chapters that she was sacrificing her body to passers-by so that she could feed her family, and the journal never objected to that.¹⁷

Even odder, however, is that the crucial language – all the way to the sacrifice of her own body" (самопожертвование до жертвы своим

¹⁷ Valerii Iakovlevich Kirpotin, *Razocharovanie i krushenie Raskolnikova: kniga o romane F. M. Dostoevskogo Prestuplenie i nakazanie* (Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel', 1974): 167–8.

телом) – *never* appeared in that note in *The Russian Messenger* – Liubimov referred to Sonia as a “woman, taking her self-sacrifice to the point of terrible victimization (до такой ужасной жертвы).”¹⁸ As Susanne Fusso has noted, Kirpotin (twice!) misquotes the language about the sacrifice of Sonia’s body, and on that misquotation he builds his claim, which is passed on by the Russian editors, who never examined the original source.¹⁹ In other words, Kirpotin added a “body” where there was none, and the *Complete Works* preserves and passes that body on, even if it disagrees with Kirpotin’s interpretation.

This is a symptomatic misreading – a mistake produced by something that is, nevertheless, disturbingly present in the original text – and like all symptoms its origins may be worth examining. In addition to Liubimov’s note, Kirpotin relies on a declaration of love made by Raskolnikov to Sonia in the notebooks, and on Katkov’s initial desire to excise chapter 11 of part 2 of *Anna Karenina*, which describes the start of Anna’s sexual intimacy with Vronsky. It may be, too, that the absence of Dostoevsky’s original text creates an interpretively charged gap, an aporia, into which interpreters are irresistibly drawn. Interestingly, an early contemporary review by the author and critic Nikolai Akhsharumov complained that Sonia was a well-conceived but poorly executed character: “She lacks a body, even though she is constantly in front of our eyes, we somehow don’t see her [...] The ideal has not become flesh and blood, but has remained in the ideal fog. In brief, all this has turned out to be thin and impalpable.”²⁰

In essence, Kirpotin used the excuse of the missing original text to put back into the novel the body that Akhsharumov said it lacked. Kirpotin never mentions, however, the language of the chapter itself. Nonetheless, it is that language and, most of all, the dynamics surrounding the *reading* of a text aloud that hint at something resembling sex, at least, sufficiently enough so as to provoke Kirpotin’s misreading.

Sonia greets Raskolnikov in a state of excitement – “Color suddenly rushed to her pale face, and tears even came to her eyes ... She had a feeling of nausea, and shame, and sweetness” (315; 6:241). A few moments later, Raskolnikov looks at her more closely: “Her pale cheeks became flushed again; her eyes had a tormented look. One could see that terribly much had been touched in her, that she wanted terribly to express something, to speak

¹⁸ “Сообщения и известия,” *Русский вестник* 200.2 (Feb. 1889): 355–361, p. 361.

¹⁹ Susanne Fusso, *Editing Turgenev, Dostoevsky, & Tolstoy: Mikhail Katkov and the Great Russian Novel* (Dekalb: Northern Illinois Press, 2017): 152.

²⁰ N. D. Aksharumov, “Преступление и наказание. Роман Ф. М. Достоевского.” *Всемирный труд* 3 (1867): 125–56, p. 151.

out, to intercede. Some sort of *insatiable* compassion, if one may put it so, showed suddenly in all the features of her face” (Бледные щеки ее опять вспыхнули, в глазах выразилась мука. Видно было, что в ней ужасно много затронули, что ей ужасно хотелось что-то выразить, сказать, заступиться. Какое-то *ненасытимое* сострадание, если можно так выразиться, изобразилось вдруг во всех чертах лица ее) (317–8; 6:243). If one may put it so – *если можно так выразиться* – the phrase already hints at the transformation of physicality and physical desire into discourse, the pedal note of this scene. Raskolnikov’s specific pathology may be discursive – the saying of “a new word” – but his crucial mistake so far has been translating language into action, a mistake not only ethical but also poetic, based on a fundamental misunderstanding of how his creator – and Sonia’s – works. For Dostoevsky, the body is less important than language: what has been done to Sonia physically matters less than what can be done to her mind, through words. Raskolnikov is moved, but also intrigued and provoked by Sonia’s essential purity: “What sustained her? Surely not depravity? All this shame obviously touched her only mechanically; no true depravity, not even a drop of it, had yet penetrated her heart – he could see that” (Что же поддерживало ее? Не разврат же? Весь этот позор, очевидно, коснулся ее только механически; настоящий разврат еще не проник ни одной каплей в ее сердце: он это видел) (323; 6:247). This observing of her inner, moral virginity arouses Raskolnikov – note the syntax of excitement:

With a new, strange, almost painful feeling, he peered at that pale, thin, irregular, and angular little face, those meek blue eyes, capable of flashing with such fire, such severe energetic feeling, that small body still trembling with indignation and wrath, and it all seemed more and more strange to him, almost impossible. (324)

С новым, странным, почти болезненным, чувством всматривался он в это бледное, худое и неправильно угловатое личико, в эти кроткие голубые глаза, могущие сверкать таким огнем, с таким суровым энергическим чувством, в это маленько тело, еще дрожавшее от негодования и гнева, и всё это казалось ему боле и боле странным, почти невозможным. (6:248)

But Raskolnikov’s desire here is not the penetration of Sonia’s body, which would be meaningless and inconsequential. Instead, as Dennis Patrick Slattery has suggested, Raskolnikov aims at her spiritual “violation.”²¹ And an implement is at hand:

²¹ Slattery (1994–1998): 27.

There was a book lying on the chest of drawers. He had noticed it each time he paced the room; now he picked it up and looked. It was the New Testament, in Russian translation. (324; 6:248)

And not only any New Testament, but the one that had belonged to Lizaveta, the pawnbroker's sister whom Raskolnikov had murdered with the blade of his axe after first killing her sister with the blunt side. Raskolnikov will now replay, transpose, and thus, through transference, work through the trauma of his initial crime in a discursive mode. Strauss sees this moment as a positive development, a rejection of the theme of sexual violence,²² but in light of the erotic charge of texts in Dostoevsky's fiction, we should probably see it as that theme's most important and entirely conforming hypostasis. The content of the Lazarus story would seem to be the source of the intensity of the reading and its interpersonal dynamics, but those are not secondary. For Dostoevsky, how a text is read may be just as important as the text's content. Raskolnikov forces the book on Sonia, demanding four times that she read to him from the sacred text. Three times she resists. Raskolnikov insists:

Raskolnikov partly understood why Sonya was hesitant to read to him, and the more he understood it, the more rudely and irritably he insisted on her reading. He understood only too well how hard it was for her now to betray and expose all that was *hers*. He understood that these feelings might indeed constitute her *secret*, as it were, real and long-standing, going back perhaps to her adolescence, when she was still in the family, with her unfortunate father and her grief-maddened step-mother. [...] But at the same time he now knew, and knew for certain, that even though she was anguished and terribly afraid of something as she was starting out to read, she also had a tormenting desire to read, in spite of all her anguish and apprehensions, and precisely *for him*, so that he would hear it, and precisely *now* – 'whatever might come of it afterwards.' ... He read it in her eyes, understood it from her rapturous excitement. She mastered herself, suppressed the spasm in her throat that had made her voice break at the beginning of the verse, and continued her reading of the eleventh chapter of John's Gospel. (326; 6:250)

This is a far more meaningful taking of Sonia's virginity. Katerina Ivanovna may have been right when she drove her stepdaughter out into the street with the words "What's there to save? Some treasure!" (18; 6:17). In this writer's world the physical treasure doesn't matter; *this* secret – her belief – is the real and, paradoxically, discursive – thing. The impassioned syntax is twinned with the fantasy of the stereotypical rapist in at least

²² Straus (1994): 28, 35.

Victorian erotica, and probably beyond: he has to force her, but he firmly believes that this is what she really wants, and with *him*, in particular.²³ In this certainty, the text backs Raskolnikov up, it is his text after all: “He could see that” (Он это видел...).²⁴ And so Sonia reads on, the reversions to the biblical text replacing the physical activity that would be present in pornography – alternating with regular allusions to the psychological state of the actors:

Raskolnikov turned and looked at her anxiously: yes, that was it! She was already trembling in a real, true fever. He had expected that. She was approaching the word about the greatest, the unheard-of miracle (Она приближалась к слову о величайшем и неслыханном чуде), and a feeling of great triumph took hold of her. There was an iron ring to her voice: joy and triumph sounded in it and strengthened it. The lines became confused on the page before her, because her sight was dimmed, but she knew by heart what she was reading. At the last verse: “Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind ... ” she had lowered her voice, conveying ardently and passionately the doubt, reproach and reviling of the blind, unbelieving Jews, who in another moment, as if thunderstruck, would fall down, weep, and believe” And *he*, he who is also blinded and unbelieving, he, too, will now hear, he, too, will believe – yes, yes! Right now, this minute,” she dreamed, and she was trembling with joyful expectation. (327; 6:251)

The “yes, yes” reflects Sonia’s fervent belief in Raskolnikov’s redemption, but it also marks the climax of her reading.

Now I am reading this passage the way Luzhin would, but that is an essential part of Dostoevskian hermeneutics, here with the blessing of scripture; just as a man can lie his way to the truth, blasphemy can be part of the path to salvation. Notice that the excitement in this passage is quite literally paired with close reading – the key phrase in this gospel rape is “она приближалась к слову” translated by Pevear and Volokhonsky as “she approached the word,” but it might be understood – supplementally – as “she engaged in close reading.” Dostoevsky reinforces the copulative power of this reading: “The candle-end had long been burning out in the bent candlestick, casting a dim light in this destitute room upon the murderer and the harlot strangely come together over the reading of the eternal book” (Огарок уже давно погасал в кривом подсвечнике, тускло освещая в этой нищенской комнате убийцу и блудницу, странно

²³ Peter Webb, “Victorian Erotica” in Alan Bold, ed., *The Sexual Dimension in Literature* (London: Vision Press, 1982): 90–121.

²⁴ This scene is part of this novel’s more general tendency, noted by Blake, “to portray women characters through the eyes of their male counterparts” (2006):254.

сошедшихся за чтением вечной книги) (328; 6:251–2). The verb used here – сойтись – to come together – can also be used to refer to the start of a physical relationship, as Dostoevsky uses it in *Notes from Underground*. Bashing this line, Nabokov completely missed how much it played to his own aesthetics with its covert reference to the strange sex one can have in reading.²⁵

It should be noted that the theme of Sonia's reading has already been raised in an erotic context. She has declined to read to her father books that Lebeziatnikov has given her.²⁶ More importantly, Dostoevsky had treated Sonia's reading in his preparatory notebooks while sketching out the eventual conversation between Luzhin and Lebeziatnikov; there a double entendre suggests that reading, like prostitution, is one of the things that Sonia can be called on to do.

- You know, you can call (Sonia) over to read you books. That's the way she is. ... I am developing her.
- Well, you are making use of her.
- No, you know what. she says no to me. And I see that. Not only that, in principle I consider it a woman's most natural state.
- Знаете, ее можно кликнуть (Соню) книжки читать. Вот она какая.
- [...] Я ее развиваю.
- Ну и пользуетесь.
- Нет, знаете, она мне отказывает. И я это вижу. Мало того, по принципу считаю это самым естественным состоянием женщины. (7:187–8)

There is only a short step from reading books – книжки читать – to considering prostitution (считать это) woman's natural state. From читать to считать. As Nabokov might have said, the difference between getting

²⁵ Although she does not focus on either the erotic connotations of reading, or on rape, Nancy Workman argues that for all its religious significance, the Lazarus scene is “a conversion to eros”: “In this moment of transformation, what Raskolnikov embraces is not the love of God or life or humanity but a particular woman, someone who, it's implied, will be his partner in the future. [...] A man who aspired to be godlike, above other human beings, is redeemed by turning away from godlike power and embracing human frailty.” Nancy Workman. “Bone of My Bone, Flesh of My Flesh: Love in *Crime and Punishment*,” *Dostoevsky Studies* 18 (2014): 87–97. p. 95.

²⁶ On the erotic and ideological significance of the books Sonia reads, see Svetlana Berezkina, “Ф.М. Достоевский и М.Н. Катков (Из истории романа *Преступление и наказание*,” *Izvestiia RAN. Seriya literatury i iazyka* 72.5 (2013): 16–25, pp. 16–18, and Michael Katz, “The Nihilism of Sonia Marmeladova,” *Dostoevsky Studies* 1.1 (1993): 25–36. pp. 31–33.

someone to read to you and paying someone to sleep with you appears to consist in a single sibilant.²⁷

This scene in Sonia's room is in some respects reminiscent of the encounter between the Underground man and Liza, the prostitute he engages in a brothel, where he reads to her after a fashion – i.e., he “talks like a book” – and works himself up to a frenzy as he tells her about the miserable end of a prostitute's life. Following the guttural spasm that rises within him at the climax of his speech she bites her hands until she bleeds, collapsing in despair as if she has been injured far more profoundly than when she was first dishonored and came to the brothel. Reading further, we can see that the blood serves as symbolic evidence of a transposed defloration:

I had let myself be carried away to such an extent that a spasm was rising in my own throat, and ... I stopped suddenly, raised myself in a fright on my elbow, bent my head fearfully and began to listen with a beating heart. I had good cause to be disturbed.

For some time I had been feeling that I must have harrowed her soul and crushed her heart, and the more convinced I grew of it, the more I wanted to attain my end as quickly and powerfully as possible. It was the game that carried me along, the game itself, but not only the game ...

I knew that what I said was constrained and artificial, even bookish; in short (одним словом), the only way I could talk was ‘like a book’, but that wasn't what disturbed me; I knew I should be understood and felt that my very bookishness might well be a help. But now that I had made my effort my nerve failed all at once. No, never, never, had I witnessed such despair! She was lying face downwards, with her head buried in the pillow and her arms strained tightly round it. Her heart was bursting. Her whole young body shook as if she had a fever. Stifling sobs crowded into her breast until they forced their way out as wails and cries; at those moments she would press her face deeper into the pillow, for fear that any living soul in that place should know of her tears and agony. She bit the pillow, bit her hands until the blood came (as I saw later) or, desperately clutching the tangled braids of her hair, grew rigid with effort, holding her breath and clenching her teeth. (100; 5:161–2)²⁸

This is the sort of depiction of a violated woman we would expect to find in the work of later, more openly salacious writers such as Mikhail Artsybashev or perhaps Leonid Andreev – in Dostoevsky it is the picture of a woman who has been abusively read to. She has been reduced to this

²⁷ Vladimir Nabokov, *Nikolai Gogol* (New York: New Directions, 1961): 142.

²⁸ Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Notes from Underground. The Double*, trans. Jessie Coulson (London: Penguin, 1972). All citations will be to this translation, as well as to the *Полное собрание сочинений*.

point “одним словом” – “in short,” “in a word,” or, in a more literal and forced reading – “by the word alone.”

Earlier, when the Underground Man and Liza had been lying in bed at the brothel, he had asked:

Well, tell me, what's good about this? After all, you and I ... came together [сошлись] ... just now, and we didn't speak a word to one another the whole time, and afterwards, you began to stare at me like a wild thing; and so did I at you. Is that love? Is that the way two human beings ought to come into contact? It's ugly, that's what it is! (91; 5:155)

The story subsequently shows that it isn't necessarily better or less ugly *with* words; in fact, when words replace sex, the intercourse is more volcanic, more devastating. But as in *Crime and Punishment*, in *Notes from Underground* the male subject depicts the effect of the violation on the woman as salutary:

Wait, she said suddenly. [...] As she ran off, her face was full of colour, her eyes sparkled, there was a smile on her lips – what could it mean? [...] She returned in a minute [...] Without any explanation – as if I was some higher kind of creature who knew everything without being told, she held out towards me a piece of paper. Her whole face was absolutely glowing with the most naive, almost childish, delight. I unfolded the paper. It was a letter from a young medical student, or something of the sort, a very stilted and flowery but extremely respectful declaration of love. [...] The poor little creature was preserving the student's letter as a treasure, and it was this treasure she had gone running to fetch, not wanting me to leave without knowing that she was loved [...] The letter was almost certainly destined to remain put away, without consequences. But that didn't matter; I am sure she would treasure it all her life ... w (101–2; 5:162–3)

From Sonia's virginity to Liza's letter, we find an economy of desire in which sex and text flow into one another, and in which non-consensual intercourse and forced reading open women's secrets, in a manner which they are portrayed as ultimately having enjoyed. In this case, there is an additional, intertextual layer of abuse because *Notes from Underground* parodies Nikolai Chernyshevsky's utopian novel, *What is to be Done?* Liza's appearance when she arrives with the letter – eyes sparkling, cheeks colored, smile on her lips – matches the post-coital expression of the women who populate Vera Pavlovna's Fourth Dream and who spring, according to Nabokov and Herzen, from a poor boy's fantasy of the

bordello.²⁹ Even the medical student who has written the letter seems to have copied it from the pages of Chernyshevsky's novel.

The essential difference between *Notes from Underground* and *Crime and Punishment* is that in the latter the woman is forced to do the reading. On the basis of the preparatory materials, Boris Tikhomirov has insisted that initially it was to be Sonia who took the initiative to read the story of Lazarus:

He has come to say farewell to Sonia.

– Go on, kiss the New Testament, go on, kiss it, go on kiss it!

– (Lazarus, come forth!)

– That is when she convinces him, that is, before saying farewell. (7:191)³⁰

Not only the shortening of the scene, but the change in initiative, may have been what Dostoevsky was primarily referring to when he wrote to Liubimov that he had given the reading of the Gospel a “new tone” (*drugoi kolorit*) (28.2:167). In a recent article, based on a newly discovered letter by Liubimov, Svetlana Berezkina suggests that Katkov disliked the initial version of the scene because Sonia was insufficiently humiliated, too authoritative, and not sufficiently repentant for a fallen woman.³¹ For Katkov, Dostoevsky's transgressive innovation was in portraying a prostitute who worried about things other than the loss of her chastity, indeed, one who is not so obsessed with her own degradation that her only choice is to die of repentance. Both Fusso and Tikhomirov note Dostoevsky's acknowledgment that Katkov may have saved him from his penchant for long-windedness, and they raise the possibility that the editor's intervention may have made the Lazarus scene aesthetically better.³² But another, not incompatible possibility, is that by transferring the impetus for reading the Bible from Sonia to Raskolnikov Dostoevsky

²⁹ “As for the rest [of the women]: that's my secret. In the hall you saw how their cheeks glowed and their eyes sparkled.” Nikolai Chernyshevsky, *What is to be Done?* trans. Michael R. Katz (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989): 378. Compare Dostoevsky's “она вся покраснела, глаза ее блестели” (4:162) with “Ты видела в зале, как горят щеки, как блистают глаза...” Nikolai G. Chernyshevskii, *Что делать?* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1975): 290. Cf. Vladimir Nabokov, *The Gift* (New York: Vintage, 1991): 277; Gertsen, A. I. *Собрание сочинений в тридцати томах*. (Moscow: Akademiia nauk, 1955): 29.1: 167.

³⁰ Tikhomirov (1990): 218–9.

³¹ S.V. Berezkina, “.... ‘Живет же на квартире у портного Капернаума....’ (из комментария к *Преступлению и наказанию* Достоевского,” *Russkaia literatura* 4 (2013): 169–79, pp. 174–9.

³² Dostoevskii, 28.2: 167; Tikhomirov (1990): 219; Fusso (2017): 151.

responded to Katkov's reservations by making the scene more abusive and discursively kinkier.

Looking at Raskolnikov's second visit to Sonia's room, where he confesses to her on, if not in, her bed, Carol Apollonio suggests that the scene be read as a positive development predicated on Raskolnikov's operating from a position of impotence: "Raskolnikov's *inaction* in this scene with Sonia contrasts sharply with the brutality – the overt *action* – of the murders."³³ She reads this "impotence" as having a moral value in the novel: "after all, looking at this scene *from the outside* one would only see that Raskolnikov declines to have sex with a prostitute ... [H]ere may very well lie the seed of his later salvation, through the sacrament of marriage. The importance of this message cannot be overestimated. Love is key to salvation, and it begins with the coming together of two isolated individuals, male and female."³⁴ This may be true, but this inaction has to be seen against the background not just of the murder but also of the earlier discursive coitus. Brutality has been effectively absorbed into language. Moreover, in stereotypic fashion the apparent victim of the rape comes to love her assailant. After the reading of the Lazarus story has concluded and Raskolnikov has left, the chapter's penultimate paragraph finds Sonia slipping into frenzied dreams in which the name of God provides a double climax:

Sonya spent the whole night in fever and delirium. She jumped up every now and then, wept, wrung her hands, then dropped into feverish sleep again, and dreamed of Polechka, of Katerina Ivanovna, of Lizaveta, of reading the Gospel, and of him ... him, with his pale face, his burning eyes ... He was kissing her feet, weeping ... Oh, Lord! (330; 6:253)

Standing on the other side of the locked door that leads to the adjoining room and to the succeeding and chapter-concluding paragraph, Svidrigailov seems to have eavesdropped not only on Sonia's conversation with Raskolnikov but also – rather amazingly – on the condensed, erotically-surcharged version of it provided in Sonia's dream. He has enjoyed the experience greatly:

He had found the conversation amusing and bemusing, and he had liked it very, very much – so much that he even brought a chair, in order not to be subjected again in the future, tomorrow, for instance, to the unpleasantness

³³ Apollonio (2009): 78.

³⁴ Apollonio (2009): 77. Compare Wasiolek's focus on the way the couple's bodies betray their repressed desire, so that the reader may understand the confession scene "both in spiritual and sexual terms" (1974): 266.

of standing on his feet for a whole hour, but to settle himself more comfortably and thus treat himself to a pleasure that was full in all respects (чтоб уж во всех отношениях получить полное удовольствие). (331: 6:253)

There is no need to *see* anything – listening to a couple read closely is erotic enough. As we have seen, Luzhin's interpretive practice suggests that the details of a text are not more important than how it is read. Svidrigailov's eavesdropping reveals how the Gospels can be perverted – how the word can become the wrong kind of flesh.³⁵

Nearly every reading that gives the Lazarus scene a positive spin – and that is just about every reading of the scene – neglects to mention Sonia's dream and the extent to which she has been aroused by the reading. The climax of the dream deploys the name of God to stress the compatibility of sexual and religious excitement, if it does not allow the former to take complete possession of the latter. Svidrigailov's eavesdropping is also neglected by most readings. Indeed, the revelation at the end of the chapter that Svidrigailov has been listening throughout is strikingly anomalous for eavesdropping scenes, where a hidden presence is often revealed from the start, either to authenticate the scene's reality or to track its impact on the listener's psychic development. The placement of Svidrigailov at the end of the scene may, paradoxically, be responsible for the purity the scene has maintained in its scholarly treatment and for the virtual eclipse of Sonia's

³⁵ The Lazarus scene, as perceived by Svidrigailov, might be compared to Liamshin's insertion of a pack of pornographic photographs into a religious book seller's bag in *Demons*, albeit with a sophisticated metafictional twist. One difference, of course, is that the reader never sees those photographs, while she hears everything that reaches Svidrigailov's ears and is thus as much of an eavesdropper as he. This episode is thus profoundly more disturbing than the act of desecration in the later novel. Izmirlieva sees Svidrigailov's presence in this scene purely in terms of the later workings of the novel's plot: "The mysterious providential work of the Word will be accomplished through [him]. [...] Prompted by information he learns while eavesdropping on Sonya and Raskolnikov, Svidrigailov sets in motion forces that enable their salvation in practical terms (the redistribution of his late wife's money to free Sonya from prostitution and help her accompany Raskolnikov to Siberia for his prison sentence)" (2006: 283). The odd rehabilitation of Svidrigailov in the novel, however, can be seen as an affective atonement for the part he has already played. Within the paradigm of Izmirlieva's analysis, one might say that Svidrigailov takes radical, sacrilegious advantage of Sonia's radical Christian hospitality, thus sexualizing the focalization of the entire scene. Izmirlieva reads the Lazarus scene as a parable for Matthew 18:3: "Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." "A radically open welcome to a stranger in the name of the Lord," she writes, "always brings in the presence of Christ [...] Yet as Christian hosts, we cannot control this response, and so we expose the Word to potential abuse, mockery, misunderstanding" (2006: 285). Here Izmirlieva is concerned only with Raskolnikov's reaction to Sonia's reading, but the next step in Izmirlieva's argument should be the acknowledgment that this scene is set up to enable Svidrigailov to take the place of Christ, turning Jesus into a voyeur.

dream in scholarly memory. Svidrigailov's presence serves to cathect the erotic energy that has been building up in the scene; in this respect, he functions as something of a libidinal vacuum-cleaner. (Just imagine how the scene would read if it ended with Sonia's oneiric exclamation ...) However, every rereading of the scene is necessarily colored by Svidrigailov's supplemental presence, and his reaction may be read as confirming the sexual nature of the scene that the reader, up until that moment, was loathe to admit. Even here, though, Svidrigailov is playing a double game. He can be seen as standing in not only for the close reader but for the *bad* reader, whom the good reader – morally speaking – can disown to protect not only her own virtue but the virtue of the scene as a whole, making it only about spiritual redemption.

Let me give the topic one more twist. Up until this point I have been presenting a relatively decontextualized interpretation of Sonia's compelled reading in *Crime and Punishment*, but the episode has an intriguing historical dimension. In 1861, several years before the novel's composition, a scandal had erupted in the St. Petersburg press after *The Saint Petersburg News* had published an article entitled "From the Notes of a Journey from St. Petersburg to Irkutsk." The correspondent, identified only as M.T., had stopped off in the provincial city of Perm, where he attended a charitable literary-musical evening. He missed the first numbers, which included the reading of a poem by one M. Timmerman. He was especially impressed by the next act, however: "I had just taken my place when onto the stage walked a tall woman, very beautiful, striking and remarkably expressive in her appearance, who seemed even more beautiful and striking on account of her clothing, which was unusually simple but composed with great taste."³⁶ M.T. described her attire in great detail, before relating how he had reached for his program to see who she was. "It turned out that she was Evgeniia Eduardovna Tolmacheva, who was supposed to read an excerpt from Pushkin's 'Egyptian Nights'."³⁷ The verses read by Tolmacheva were part of the speech by Cleopatra, who offers to give herself for a night to any man willing to pay with his own execution the next morning. The correspondent described with great enthusiasm and in marked detail how beautifully and passionately Tolmacheva had read. We now know that there was an element of mystification to the newspaper report, in that the correspondent, M.T., was

³⁶ M.T. "Из путевых заметок от Санктперербурга до Иркутска," *Санкт петербургские ведомости*, 1861.56 (14 February):185–6, p. 185.

³⁷ M.T. (1861): 185.

actually M. Timmerman, whose performance, directly preceding Tolmacheva's, "M.T." claimed coyly to have missed. Undoubtedly, he already knew Tolmacheva, and he was shortly to know her much better, because she soon left her husband and eloped with Timmerman to Kazan.³⁸

The article was remarked upon by another St. Petersburg journal, *The Age*, which published a satirical and polemical response strongly censuring the reading in Perm as indecent.³⁹ There was a furious response from other St. Petersburg papers, which saw the article in *The Age* as a slanderous attack on Tolmacheva, a woman with good progressive credentials; she was soon to pay a visit to Hertsen in London.⁴⁰ The *St Petersburg News* published a furious response by M. L. Mikhailov, "The Outrageous Act of *The Age*," which it said was only one of many indignant reactions it had received on the subject. Dostoevsky eagerly joined the fray, publishing an article in his journal *Time* defending Tolmacheva, whom he understood *The Age* to be slandering as a loose woman (19:91–104). Katkov published an article of his own in *The Russian Messenger*, siding with *The Age* and arguing that the reading from "Egyptian Nights" had been highly inappropriate. Dostoevsky had written that "on an uncivilized, vicious heart, even the Venus de Medici can create only a voluptuous impression" (19:103).⁴¹ Katkov responded:

³⁸ G. F. Kogan, "Разыскания о Достоевском," *Литературное наследство*, Vol. 86. (Moscow: Nauka, 1973): 581–605, p. 584. A much fuller discussion of this episode is provided by Fusso (2017):109–118, whose thoughtful analysis of Katkov's relations with Dostoevsky has been invaluable to me in the writing of this article. See, also, her treatment of the Tolmacheva controversy in her earlier book, *Discovering Sexuality in Dostoevsky* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2006): 3–12.

³⁹ Kamen-Vinogorov, "Русские диковинки." *Век*. 22 Feb. 1861 (No. 8): 289–92. The introduction to the article promised its readers something of an erotic freak show of cultural materials: "I promise you a source of great pleasures, if you like rarities. My kunstkamera is of the most precious, and I will reveal to you her treasures" (Обещаю вам источник великих наслаждений, если вы любите редкости. Моя кунсткамера из самых драгоценных - и для вас стану я открывать ее сокровища): 290.

⁴⁰ F. G. Kogan considers it certain that Dostoevsky and his colleagues at *Time*, some of whom came from Kazan, were aware of these details of Tolmacheva's life (1973): 584.

⁴¹ In his reference to classical sculptures, Dostoevsky was drawing on a trope also employed by Dobroliubov in his conflicted, quasi-erotic reading of Turgenev's *On the Eve*: "After all, there are people who feel only sensual excitement even when they see the Venus de Milo, and who say when they look at a Madonna: 'she...will....do.' But art and poetry are not intended for such people, and neither is true morality. In them everything is transformed into something disgusting and unclean." N. A. Dobroliubov, *Русские классики* (Moscow: Nauka, 1976): 210. For an analysis of Dobroliubov's reading of Turgenev and of the way in which it simultaneously condemns *poshlost* and performs it, see Konstantine Klioutchkine, "Between Ideology and

But really do the Venus de Medici or the Venus de Milo amount to those expressions of the passion that resounds in Cleopatra's words? Aren't these Olympian types the most chaste of images, suffused with pure elegance. aren't they the live soul of decency? Don't these images themselves serve as the embodiment of this refined modesty, of this captivating secret? And did the chisels of not only Phidias and Praxiteles, but also of those sculptors from the most decadent epochs, ever go all the way to the *ultimate expressions* of passion (до *последних выражений* страстности)? Were the satyrs and fauns, in whom are embodied precisely that which is concealed by shame in human life, ever portrayed by art in the form of *the ultimate expressions*, aren't their half-animalistic forms stamped instead by a surprising modesty? [...] Is there really any place in the world, in Europe or in America, where an actress could read this fragment in public without unintentionally putting into relief that which points directly to the ultimate expressions of passion, not having the strength to imbue them with the hint of an idea which could not be expressed in an unfinished fragment and that would throw a veil over a mystery which should never be exposed?⁴²

Dostoevsky published a response to Katkov in *Time*; characteristically he wrote that a first reading of Katkov's article had not revealed its deficiencies; its outrageous flaws became clear to him only upon a secondary reading, a вторичное спокойное чтение which was slow and obsessive but in no respects peaceful (19:119). In particular, Dostoevsky criticized Katkov for his attachment to the phrase the "ultimate expressions of passion," which was 1860s speech for orgasm: "You're really stuck on that 'ultimate expression of passion'" (Далось вам это *последнее выражение* страсти) (19:134). He pointed out that there is nothing close to such "ultimate expressions" in Pushkin's "Egyptian Nights" but added that even if there was something potentially indecent, it had been transformed by Pushkin's art. The same was true of classical nude sculptures: "Here reality has been transformed, *having gone through art*, having gone through the fire of pure, chaste inspiration and through the artistic thought of the poet. This is the secret of art, and every artist knows it. But on an unprepared nature, or on a crude and depraved one, even art cannot have an effect" (19:134). In this last sentence, we see, as Fusso suggests, a certain "uneasiness" in Dostoevsky's position.⁴³ Where his friend and colleague, Nikolai Strakhov – also writing about Tolmacheva in *Time* – had taken innocence as the default option, Dostoevsky kept

Desire: Rhetoric of the Self in the Works of Nikolai Chernyshevskii and Nikolai Dobroliubov," *Slavic Review*, 68.2 (Summer, 2009): 335–354, p. 347.

⁴² Mikhail N. Katkov, "Наш язык и что такое свистуны," *Russkii vestnik* 32 (March, 1861): 1–38, p. 37.

⁴³ Fusso (2017):125.

admitting that not becoming sexually excited by art *might* require a certain preparation and maturity. Indeed, a few years later he would even extend this caution to the New Testament, which could be misread for “physiological” reasons by junkers and gymnasium students (23:20). Moreover, Dostoevsky’s own elaboration of the dreadfulness of Cleopatra’s sensuality in Pushkin’s tale goes into such extensive details about her lust-filled fantasy that one begins to suspect he had difficulty putting down his pen.⁴⁴

The relevance of this episode to *Crime and Punishment* has been noted by several scholars.⁴⁵ Svidrigailov mentions it in passing during his conversation with Raskolnikov at the start of part four: “By the way, you must remember how a few years ago [...] one of our noblemen was disgraced nationwide and presswide [...] he gave a whipping to a German woman on a train, remember? It was then, too, in that same year, I think, that the ‘Outrageous Act of *The Age*’ occurred (I mean the Egyptian Nights, the public reading, remember? [...]) Oh, where have you gone, golden days of our youth!” (283; 6:216).⁴⁶ We should not forget that this remark served to put into the original reader’s mind – as she raced towards the coming Biblical recitation – the story of a scandal started by debate over a woman reading potentially erotic material aloud.

There are, however, several additional, hitherto unremarked, aspects of the Tolmacheva affair that tie it more profoundly to the sexual and

⁴⁴ “How much unprecedented lust and hitherto unexperienced pleasure! How much demonic happiness there is in kissing one’s victim, loving it, for several hours becoming the slave of this victim, quenching all its desires with all her secrets of kissing, pleasure and frenetic passion, and at the same time to be conscious every minute that this victim, her momentary master, will pay with his life for this love and for the proud audacity of his fleeting control over her. The hyena has already had the taste of blood, she dreams of its warm steam, it will be in her mind as she experiences the ultimate moment of pleasure” (19:136). By the time he reaches the hyena, Dostoevsky and Katkov are essentially on the same page, confirming Fusso’s claim that frequently in their disputes “personal antipathy obscured essential agreement.” Susanne Fusso, “Prelude to a Collaboration: Dostoevsky’s Aesthetic Polemic with Mikhail Katkov” in *Dostoevsky Beyond Dostoevsky: Science, Religion, Philosophy*, eds. Svetlana Evdokimova and Vladimir Golstein (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2016): 193–212, p. 203.

⁴⁵ See, *inter alia*, Boris Tikhomirov, *Лазарь! Гряди вон: Роман Ф. М. Достоевского Преступление и наказание в современном прочтении* (St. Petersburg: Serebrianniy vek, 2005): 273; Fusso (2017): 116; Konstantine Kliutchkine, “The Rise of *Crime and Punishment* from the Air of the Media,” *Slavic Review*, 61.1 (Spring 2002): 88–108, pp. 93–4.

⁴⁶ Kliutchkine notes that in the original journal publication the name of the journal was neither capitalized nor italicized, thus permitting an understanding of the phrase as “the abominable act of the century,” an example of how easily “discursive products” can blend into “events of real life” (2002): 94.

polemical dynamics of *Crime and Punishment*. The initial account in the *St. Petersburg News* was certainly written in a state of rapture, not surprising given what we now know about the relations of the correspondent to Mrs. Tolmacheva. *The Age* picked up on details of the reading, quoting the original account extensively but adding in parentheses its own sarcastic commentary, which kept hinting at something indecent. In other words, this was a replay, or rather a preplay, of Luzhin's treatment of Lebeziatnikov, which, we should note, reflects the workings of the journalistic polemics of the day:⁴⁷

A Russian woman, the wife of a state councilor, appeared in front of the public in the guise of Cleopatra, and declaimed the queen's proposition to "sell one of her nights at the price of a life" – and how she declaimed it! I cannot refrain from including a delightful excerpt from the report of the correspondent of our amazing political newspaper: "Her big eyes alternately glowed, grew dim and went dark (*Akh! How good that must have been!*), her face was constantly changing, its expression switching from tender and passionate, to burning, to implacably stern, to proud and provocative (*oho!*) The line following the proposition of Cleopatra – to buy one of her nights at the price of your life – the famous line – "And she cast a contemptuous glance at her admirers" – was read, in actuality, with *such* an expression of contempt and wicked derision, the young woman swept the silent crowd with *such* a gaze, that had this been in a theatre, the hall would have shaken with applause."

I am not a theatrical hall, but I shook with applause, when I had read these amazing lines. I didn't understand, however, what sort of relations the visitors of this Perm literary evening had to the admirers of Cleopatra, but there probably were such relations, because otherwise why would Mme. Tolmacheva sweep the hall with a gaze of "contempt and wicked derision." [...] Down with all modesty, down with femininity, down with social decency – that is what Mme. Tolmacheva and her respected panegyrist invite you to do. [...] Women's emancipation has been achieved and now triumphantly acknowledged by [*The St. Petersburg News!*] How can we argue with it, when it so truly understands that the female sex should not subordinate itself and that a woman's public reading of *The Egyptian Nights* is a sign of her acting with complete freedom! [...] Won't Mme Tolmachev read another poem by Pushkin, "No, I do not value stormy delights," which is also remarkable in respect to its artistry: Read it, read it, Mme. Tolmacheva. Reading it you can assume even better a provocative expression and make even more expressive gestures! If you are going to

⁴⁷ As Klioutchkine points out, newspapers tended to fill their pages by extensively quoting from and polemicizing with the already published articles of their opponents (2002): 91–2.

emancipate yourself, why not go all the way! Why stop when you are only half way there.⁴⁸

The Age was implying, Dostoevsky would claim in his first article on the subject, that Tolmacheva had had *relations* with many members of the audience (19:98). Indeed, the three key words used by all participants in the debate – public, reading, and woman – as in “public reading by a woman” “a woman reading in public” – hint that a public reading by a woman might easily be a reading by a public woman, in other words, by a prostitute.

Katkov insisted that “Egyptian Nights” was a fragment in which Pushkin had not yet managed to package erotic elements – those “ultimate expressions of passion” – in a safe aesthetic frame. He mocked part of Tolmacheva’s defense of her choice of text. She had said “in England, for example, a young girl goes boldly into a den of depravity, learns there about all its filth and misery, but as a result of that she doesn’t become the least immoral. On the contrary, she will only learn about life in all its manifestations, will understand it and will be a serious woman.”⁴⁹ Katkov disagreed:

If somewhere, in England or in Russia, a young girl decided to step into a den of depravity with the chastity and holiness of an angel, in order to extract fallen creatures from the abyss and sanctify them, then such a girl, if she ever appeared anywhere, would not be a mere mortal, she would be an extraordinary creature, in any case she would descend into these abysses not with the coldblooded intention of seeing different sides of life and so putting the finish on her education: such a deed could be only an extraordinary exploit, an act of sacred sacrifice, in the spirit of religious zeal and the highest degree of self-renunciation; in any case it would have nothing to do with the reading of those verses at the musical literary evening in Perm.⁵⁰

Here the girl who descends heroically into the mire begins to sound a lot like that other public woman and paragon of self-sacrifice, Sonia. Retrospectively, we begin to hear other relevant sounds in Katkov’s article. Summarizing the furor that surrounded *The Age*’s disparagement of Tolmacheva, Katkov says, “If the crime was great, the punishment was terrible” [Если преступление было велико, то и наказание было ужасно].⁵¹ The most striking moment, though, comes when Katkov turns

⁴⁸ Kamen-Vinogorov (1861): 290–1.

⁴⁹ M.T. (1861): 186.

⁵⁰ Katkov (1861): 31.

⁵¹ Katkov (1861): 22.

to the performance itself and asks “Now let’s look at *how* she read.” He quotes Timmerman’s article at length and adds:

What is this? Merciless mockery, after which all the exclamation points and jibes of the columnist of *The Age* are as insignificant as would be a mosquito bite after being hit with the blunt-side of an axe [после удара обухом], or is this actually enthusiasm and rapturous surprise? The tone, in which the entire vulgar article is written does not leave any place for irony or for a joke. It is, by all its characteristics, the overt, sincere effusion of a soul overcome by pleasure.⁵²

I’ve never been certain why Dostoevsky has Raskolnikov commit his first murder with the blunt side of his axe, and this reference does not entirely explain it, but it tantalizingly suggests Dostoevsky’s continual investment in polemics with the man who he later hoped would publish his work. We see how crucial the Tolmacheva debate and its language may have been to the evolution of *Crime and Punishment* and how deeply Katkov’s article and this discussion of depraved reading continued to affect Dostoevsky at the time. Kliutchkine has shown how embedded in journalistic polemics *Crime and Punishment* was; Fusso, Catharine Nepomnyashchy, and Berezkina have argued convincingly that Dostoevsky’s worry about the possibility of Katkov’s lingering resentment led him to incorporate into the novel a number of details that congenially referenced things Katkov had recently written.⁵³ But pressed by Katkov to alter a crucial scene, Dostoevsky may have allowed the repressed bile to bubble forth. In his final contribution to this debate, Dostoevsky emphasized that it was only unrefined, virtually uncivilized or profoundly prurient listeners who could find “Egyptian Nights” lurid or suggestive. In effect he tests this notion in Part Four of *Crime and Punishment* by having a depraved soul listen pruriently to the reading of the Gospel. What kind of person, he asks, could get sexually excited by the reading of the Gospel? Dostoevsky may have intended to limit that answer to “Svidrigailov,” who is listening behind the door intent on attaining “a pleasure that would be full in all respects” (во всех отношениях получить полное удовольствие) but we now see that Svidrigailov is standing in for others who could find a sacred or virtually sacred text arousing when read by a woman. These others include Katkov, the editor of the journal in which *Crime and Punishment*

⁵² Katkov (1861): 32.

⁵³ Kliutchkine (2002): *passim*; Fusso (2017): 138–41; Catharine Theimer Nepomnyashchy, “Katkov and the Emergence of the *Russian Messenger*,” *Urbandus Review*, Vol. 1, no. 1 (1977): 59–89, p. 37; S. V. Berezkina (2013, “Ф.М. Достоевский и М.Н. Катков”): *passim*.

appeared, with his continual harping on “the ultimate expressions of passion” (последние выражения страстности) a man who probably didn’t realize that in publishing this scene he was caricaturing himself. (And if it was Katkov’s pressure that led Dostoevsky to make the scene more abusive and more erotically enflamed, then Katkov’s caricatured position emerges as an ultimate expression of poetic justice ...)⁵⁴

From today’s standpoint, Dostoevsky’s position in the Tolmacheva debate looks sympathetic – he stands on the side of equal rights for women and against the condemnation of art as obscene or unfit for female consumption. Yet there is still something disturbing about the final iteration of the reading scene, which, as in the scene with Sonia’s pocket, exalts the heroine even as it violates her – both through Raskolnikov’s compelling Sonia to read and through Svidrigailov’s intrusion into her privacy. This disturbing element comes to the fore if we take a quick look at the poem *The Age* suggested that Tolmacheva might have read had she really wanted to go all the way. Written by Pushkin, it compares two types of sexual congress and two types of sexual climax:

Нет, я не дорожу мятежным наслаждением,
Восторгом чувственным, безумством, исступлением,
Стенаньем, криками вакханки молодой,
Когда, виясь в моих объятиях змией,
Порывом пылких ласк и язвою лобзаний
Она торопит миг последних содроганий!

О, как милее ты, смиренница моя!
О, как мучительно тобою счастлив я.
Когда, склоняясь на долгие моления,
Ты предаешься мне нежна без упоенья,
Стыдливо-холодна, восторгу моему
Едва отвечаешь, не внемлешь ничему
И оживляешься потом все боле, боле —
И делишь наконец мой пламень поневоле!

[No, I do not value stormy delights, the rapture of the senses, madness, frenzy, the groans, the cries of a young Bacchant, when, writhing in my

⁵⁴ This episode would not have been Dostoevsky’s first literary caricature of Katkov. In an 1862 article in *Time*, he had lampooned Katkov as a bombastic orator with a slavish appreciation for all things English. Moreover, he had given this ridiculous orator lines taken not only from Katkov’s writing but also from Pavel Petrovich in *Fathers and Sons*. Dostoevsky thus turned Katkov into a caricature in two of the now most canonical literary texts of the nineteenth century: Turgenev’s novel and his own. See Fusso, 128, and *PSS* 20:280, 288–90.

serpent's embraces, she hastens the instant of final shudders with a rush of fiery caresses and stinging kisses.

Oh, how much dearer, my meek love, oh, how agonizingly happy I am with you, when, yielding to long prayers, you give yourself to me without delight. shyly-cold you hardly respond to my rapture, you pay no heed to anything, and then you are all the time more and more enlivened and at last you share my flame, against your will!]⁵⁵

Roman Jakobson has written a witty, if not exactly politically enlightened, analysis of this poem, in which he suggests that it works according to the principles that sex is better in the dative case than in the instrumental, and that both kinds of coitus require a transitive verb to reach orgasm.⁵⁶ More salient for readers of *Crime and Punishment*, however, are the sexual ethics – according to the poem, the best sex occurs when the woman doesn't initially want it and then is brought to pleasure against her will. Dostoevsky never comments directly on the poem, but he reinscribes it – including the prayers – into the scene where Raskolnikov forces the raising of Lazurus onto the initially reluctant and then impassioned Sonia. One is not bound to hear *The Age's* mocking encouragement “Read, it Mme. Tolmacheva” in Raskolnikov's command to Sonia to “Read!”, but that latter injunction effectively reads Sonia into the position of Pushkin's desired partner.

In his recent commentary on this poem, Michael Wachtel glosses its last line and, in particular, поневоле, as meaning “involuntarily (*not* against your will).”⁵⁷ Dal's dictionary, however, provides among its other definitions of the adverb “против, вопреки воле, принужденно, силой (against, in spite of, through compulsion, by force.)”⁵⁸ Rather than ignore the poet's exaltation of sex without consent, one might go further to read Pushkin's poem as being not only about forced sex but also about poetry or even art itself. After all, a younger Jakobson defined the revitalizing poetic speech of Revolutionary realism as the technique of *слово изнасилованное*, the raped or violated word, a phrase that the posthumous translators of “On Artistic Realism” have

⁵⁵ A.S. Pushkin, *Полное собрание сочинений в десяти томах* (Moscow: Akademiia nauk SSSR, 1957–58), 3:390. Translated by Robin Edmonds in his *Pushkin: The Man and His Age* (London: Macmillan, 1994): 144.

⁵⁶ Jakobson sees the poem's audacity in its “transformation of an entire system of grammatical categories into the language of passions.” Roman Jakobson, *Selected Writings. Vol. 3. Poetry of Grammar and Grammar of Poetry* (The Hague: Mouton, 1981): 373.

⁵⁷ Michael Wachtel, *A Commentary to Pushkin's Lyric Poetry, 1826–1836* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011): 174.

⁵⁸ Vladimir Dal', *Толковый словарь живого великорусского языка*. 4 vols (Moscow: Terra, 1998). 3:380.

translated more genteelly as the “word forced into service.”⁵⁹ As I’ve already noted, nearly all commentators of the Lazarus scene neglect to mention Svidrigailov listening behind the door, just as they inevitably pass over Sonia’s erotic dream. The power of that scene, however, rests, just as it does so often in Dostoevsky’s work, on the aggressive challenge of perverse listening. Although in “On Artistic Realism” Jakobson mentions Dostoevsky’s realism as a forerunner of modernist avant-garde realism, he doesn’t realize the extent to which Dostoevsky anticipated Jakobson’s dictum, for in his revision of the Lazarus scene, Dostoevsky avoided the aesthetic dangers posed by preachiness through a virtual enactment of the principle of Слово изнасилованное, in which the Bible itself is both the victim and the instrument of sexual assault, as Sonia is symbolically raped by the Word with a capital W.⁶⁰

In Part Four, chapter four of *Crime and Punishment*, the Biblical narrative is defamiliarized, that is, it is given new redemptive power by its emplotment in Dostoevsky’s novel, yet at the same time the Bible is profaned, with the raising of Lazarus serving both to incite and metaphorically to reflect rising sexual excitement. Reading the Bible aloud, Sonia raises not only Lazarus but Svidrigailov’s flesh. Editing his novel to meet Katkov’s specifications, Dostoevsky paradoxically produced a profoundly pornophonic text. Flesh becomes word, but the erotic affect and the sense of erotic compulsion remain. As we have seen, sex in Dostoevsky is intensely discursive; he understood that *in a novel* pleasure is *most* unmediated when it rests on an insistence on the eroticism of reading. Once

⁵⁹ Compare Jakobson (1981):725 and Roman Jakobson, *Language in Literature* (Cambridge, MA: The Belmont Press, 1987): 22.

⁶⁰ Tolmacheva’s very name – from an old Tatar word put to service in Kievan Russia to mean “translator” – may have implicated her in the substitutional logic of the Bible’s standing in for Pushkin, because there was by this time a literary tradition of worry that the Bible could be arousing if its text were too accessible. In Matthew Lewis’s *The Monk*, the heroine’s mother censors the Bible for her daughter’s reading, but that does not provide adequate protection for her virtue. That Sonia reads the story of Lazarus in its Russian translation is usually seen as an autobiographical reference to the Bible which Dostoevsky was given on his way to Siberia (Tikhomirov, 2005: 288), but the explicit reference in the scene to translation – Это был Новый завет в русском переводе – which would have been obvious in any case once Sonia began reading – may serve as a further link between this scene and the reading by Tolmacheva, substituting an erotic reading of the Bible in the Russian vernacular for a scandalous reading of Pushkin by a woman named “translator.”

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you put down the book, the intensity starts to dissipate, and the only recourse may be to do what Dostoevsky did upon completing *Crime and Punishment*: he married his stenographer

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Stawrogins Selbstmord: eine „Nachfolge Christi“. Dostojewskijs „Dämonen“ als Manifest des Atheismus

Die fünf großen Romane Dostojewskijs, auf denen sein Weltruhm beruht, sind zwischen 1866 und 1880 erschienen und behandeln nur ein einziges Jahrzehnt: die Jahre 1865 bis 1873.

„Schuld und Sühne“ erscheint 1866 bis 1867 und spielt im Jahre 1865. „Der Idiot“ erscheint 1868 bis 1869 und spielt 1867 und 1868. „Die Dämonen“ erscheinen 1871 und 1872 und spielen 1870. „Der Jüngling“ erscheint 1875 und spielt im Jahre 1873. „Die Brüder Karamasow“ erscheinen 1879 und 1880 spielen aber im Jahre 1866. Dostojewskij wollte „sein Jahrzehnt“ noch einmal veranschaulichen, jetzt aber im Wissen um eine vom Christentum beherrschte Zukunft. Der Tod hat Dostojewskij gehindert, den zweiten Teil der „Brüder Karamasow“ zu schreiben.

Man sieht: „Die Dämonen“ sind der dritte Roman in der Reihe der „großen Fünf“. Mit den „Dämonen“ erreicht Dostojewskijs politisch-soziale Analyse seiner russischen Gegenwart ihren pessimistischen Gipfel. Die beklemmenden Visionen eines Goya nehmen hier literarische Gestalt an, und mit der Bosheit eines Swift wird die Hölle der russischen Provinz zelebriert. Massenmord, Mord und Selbstmord sind die Wahrzeichen des herrschenden Weltzustands. Es ist die Feuersbrunst des Nihilismus, die hier wütet und nicht zu löschen ist, weil sie in Wahrheit „nicht auf den Dächern“, sondern „in den Köpfen“ stattfindet, wie es im Text des Romans heißt.

Nikolaj Stawrogin, 29 Jahre alt, ist in dieser Hölle der russischen Provinz die Hauptgestalt: im Auftreten ein Gentleman, der mit Auslandserfahrung nun wieder Zuhause ist. Er inspiriert seine drei Jünger zu einem Verbrechen, um zu demonstrieren, dass in unserer Welt auch ein

Mörder ungestraft davonkommt, weil der liebe Gott, dessen Allmacht eine solche Tat verhindern könnte, gar nicht existiert. Stawrogins drei Jünger, das sind: Pjotr Werchowenskij, der Mörder, Alexej Kirillow, der Selbstmörder, und Iwan Schatow, das Opfer, das ermordet wird. Ja, Kirillow gesteht, bevor er sich erschießt, schriftlich, Schatow ermordet zu haben, obwohl er den Mord gar nicht begangen hat. Pjotr Werchowenskij entkommt ins Ausland. Und Stawrogin erhängt sich mit einer Seidenschnur, nachdem er zuvor Bischof Tichon gebeichtet hat, dass er ein noch minderjähriges Mädchen verführt und in den Selbstmord getrieben hat. Seine Beichte liegt dem Bischof schriftlich vor und soll in möglichst vielen Exemplaren verbreitet sowie in alle Sprachen übersetzt werden. Insinuiert wird eine Parallele zum Neuen Testament.

Was aber wollte Dostojewskij mit einer solch absurden Geschichte veranschaulichen, deren Verlauf auch im Roman schließlich die Öffentlichkeit in Atem hält? Die Deutung der „Dämonen“ hat ihren Lesern zu allen Zeiten Schwierigkeiten gemacht, denn Dostojewskijs Schema der Abstraktion, das auch hier allen konkreten Details zugrunde liegt, erfordert in diesem Fall eine besondere Reflexion.

Die unausgesprochene Prämisse Dostojewskijs besteht hier darin, dass sich Stawrogin mit allem, was er denkt, fühlt, sagt und tut in einem unaufhörlichen Dialog mit Gott befindet, dessen Allmacht Stawrogin beschwört, damit in der bestehenden Welt kein Unrecht geschieht. Gott aber greift nicht ins Geschehen ein, was Stawrogins Empörung auslöst. Programmatisch heiratet er ein verkrüppeltes Mädchen (Marja Lebjadkina), das ohne ihn keinen Geliebten gefunden hätte. Er „glaubt“, wird aber nicht „erhört“. Gott schweigt.

Und deshalb arrangiert Stawrogin mit seinen drei Jüngern, die er aber in seinen Plan nicht einweiht, ein Geschehen, woran zentriert genau das zum Ausdruck kommt, was für die Welt im Ganzen typisch ist: mit einem unschuldigen Opfer (Schatow), einem Selbstmörder, der die Justiz irreführt (Kirillow), und einem gewissenlosen Mörder, der unerkannt ins Ausland entkommt (Pjotr Werchowenskij). Das heißt: Stawrogin lässt in seinem Dialog mit Gott das wahre Wesen der Schöpfung sichtbar werden, das seine Pointe darin hat, dass Gott nicht eingreift. Darüber muß die Menschheit durch sichtbare Beispiele aufgeklärt werden, um die Schöpfung nicht zu bejahren und sich von ihr abzuwenden.

Ja, mit der schriftlich fixierten Beichte seiner eigenen Untat (Zweiter Teil, Neuntes Kapitel: Bei Tichon) wird Stawrogins Selbstmord zur „Selbstkreuzigung“, signiert von Dostojewskij selbst, denn der Name „Stawrogin“ enthält das griechische Wort „Kreuz“: stavros. Wir haben es

mit einer gegenläufigen (d. h. pervertierten) „Imitatio Christi“ zu tun!

Gelesen mit den Augen Stawrogins, erweist sich das Handlungsschema der „Dämonen“ als Manifest des Atheismus: traditionsbewusst, aber ohne Frohe Botschaft. Als „Bürger des Kantons Uri“ hat Stawrogin, so will es Dostojewskij, seine Ideen aus dem unsittlichen Ausland bezogen. Vernunft: ja! Aber ohne Gott.

Soweit ich sehe, hat die bisherige Forschung meine Lesart der „Dämonen“ bislang nicht herausgearbeitet.

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Osama bin Stavrogin.
Die Dämonen des islamischen Terrors.
Eine Auseinandersetzung mit André
Glucksmanns *Dostoïevski à Manhattan*.¹

„Von der brennenden Kleinstadt im russischen Imperium bis zum schwarzen September in Manhattan hat der, nach Aussage Dostoevskijs, nihilistische Zorn Ruine auf Ruine angehäuft, in seinen Mitteln immer effektiver werdend und immer verheerender im universellen Maßstab. Kirillov begeht Selbstmord um der Welt zu beweisen, dass kein Gott existiert. Hat sich [Mohammed] Atta, als er den Wolkenkratzer traf, nicht stärker gefühlt als Amerika, als dieser Papiertiger? Oder hat er sich nicht, im Namen Allahs, mächtiger gefühlt als Allah selbst?“²

Die Gemeinsamkeit, die der französische Philosoph André Glucksmann hier zwischen einer Romanfigur aus Dostoevskijs Roman *Dämonen* (Besy, 1873) und einem der Attentäter des 11. September 2001 herstellt, beschränkt sich sicherlich nicht allein auf ihre akademische Ausbildung zum Bauingenieur bzw. Ingenieur für Städtebau und Stadtplanung mit Diplom der TU Hamburg-Harburg. Und wohl auch nicht auf ihre in Amerika verbrachte Zeit, in der sie in Isolation von der Gesellschaft zu selbstzerstörerischen Entschlüssen gelangten. Glucksmann erkennt vielmehr in den beiden noch jungen Männern die gleiche Form einer stolzen Selbsterhöhung, in der sich der Mensch über Gott erhebt und in einer

¹ Der Beitrag stellt die überarbeitete schriftliche Fassung eines Vortrags dar, der auf dem „Symposium zum 80. Geburtstag von Prof. Dr. Horst-Jürgen Gerigk“ am 10. November 2017 an der Universität Heidelberg gehalten wurde.

² André Glucksmann: *Dostoïevski à Manhattan*. Paris 2002, S. 24/25. Russ.: Andre Gljuksman: *Dostoevskij na Manchëttene*. Perevod s francuzkogo V. Babinceva. Ekaterinburg 2006 (= Serija „Akademičeskij bestseller“). S. 20. Die russische und die französische Ausgabe wurden zusammen gelesen, folgende Zitate fortan aus diesen beiden Ausgaben im Text belegt. Übersetzungen, soweit nicht anders vermerkt, vom Verfasser.

fatalen illusionären Allmachthphantasie glaubt, das Recht zur Gewaltausübung sich selbst und den Mitmenschen gegenüber usurpieren zu dürfen. Mit anderen Worten, der atheistische Russe des 19. und der islamistische Glaubensfanatiker des 21. Jahrhunderts handeln nach der gleichen Maxime: ‚Wenn es keinen Gott gibt, dann ist alles erlaubt‘.

Diesen auf den ersten Blick in Bezug auf die selbsterklärten Gotteskrieger der al-Quaida vielleicht befremdlich anmutenden Zusammenhang hat Glucksmann in seinem noch direkt unter dem Einfluss des Terroranschlags von 9/11 geschriebenen philosophischen Essay *Dostoïevski à Manhattan* hergestellt. Mittlerweile lassen sich mit Abhandlungen unter der Rubrik „Dostoievskijs Bedeutung für die Gegenwart“ wohl ganze Bibliotheken füllen und Glucksmann scheint eine besonders provokante Variante dazu beigetragen zu haben, wenn er fordert dass die Nachrichten von CNN mit Textbausteinen aus Dostoievskijs Werk untertitelt werden müssten, oder wenn er gar noch behauptet, die Anschläge in Manhattan hätten verhindert werden können, die CIA hätte zuvor nur aufmerksam Dostoievskijs Romane lesen müssen.³ Gleichwohl sind die 2002 geäußerten Thesen eines der Hauptvertreter der „Nouvelle Philosophie“ nicht veraltet und haben sogar durch den Feldzug der Terrororganisation des „Islamischen Staats“ so an Brisanz und Aktualität gewonnen, dass es gerechtfertigt scheinen mag, sich die Argumentation erneut unter kritischen Gesichtspunkten vor Augen zu führen.

Dostoievskijs Roman *Die Dämonen* gilt als der erste Roman der Weltliteratur, der sich mit dem Phänomen des Terrorismus auseinandersetzt.⁴ Als aufmerksamer Zeitungsleser hat der russische Autor eine kurz nach 1870 gerade hoch aktuelle Affäre um einen Mordfall innerhalb einer konspirativen Gruppe um den verdächtigen Extremisten Sergej Nečaev, der mit ausländischen Anarchisten in Verbindung stand, aufgegriffen und in seinem Werk verarbeitet. Angereichert mit diversen

³ „Il faut sous-titrer CNN avec Dostoïevski“, im Text auf der Rückseite der französischen Ausgabe und in einem Interview mit der spanischen Zeitung ABC genau ein Jahr nach den Anschlägen, vgl. „Si la CIA leyera a Dostoïevski habría evitado el ataque contra Manhattan“. Online abrufbar unter <http://www.abc.es/hemeroteca/historico-11-09-2002/abc/Internacional/si-la-cia-leyera-a-dostoievski-habria-evitado-el-ataque-contra-manhattan_128588.html> - letzter Zugriff 14.02.2019. Allerdings zeigt Gabriel Rockhill, dass der CIA zwar vielleicht nicht die Romane des Russen liest, dafür aber sehr genau die französischen Philosophen der neuen Richtung, vgl. *The CIA Reads French Theory: On the Intellectual Labor of Dismantling the Cultural Left*, online aufrufbar unter <<http://thephilosophicalsalon.com/the-cia-reads-french-theory-on-the-intellectual-labor-of-dismantling-the-cultural-left/>> - letzter Zugriff 14.02.2019.

⁴ Siehe z.B. den Klappentext zu John P. Moran: *The Solution of the Fist: Dostoevsky and the Roots of Modern Terrorism*. Lanham, MD, 2009.

Provinzposen, gescheiterten Liebesgeschichten und Skandalen ist so ein opulentes Sittengemälde der russischen Gesellschaft außerhalb der beiden Hauptstädte in der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts entstanden, und dabei hätte es bleiben können. Aber wohl kaum einem anderen Roman des russischen Realismus ist ein derart hohes prophetisches Potential unterstellt worden, wie gerade diesem Werk. Spätestens mit Berdjaevs Diktum unmittelbar nach dem Oktoberumsturz 1917, Dostoevskij sei der Prophet der russischen Revolution, waren die Schleusen geöffnet. Berdjaev behauptet gar, dass die Figuren aus den *Dämonen* der russischen Wirklichkeit zu Beginn der 1870er Jahre überhaupt nicht entsprächen, es seien vielmehr Menschen des 20. Jahrhunderts.⁵

Doch nicht allein die bolschewistischen Putschisten um Lenin sind hier vorgebildet: mit dem Fortgang der Gewaltgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts erfüllen sich anscheinend auch immer mehr der Prophezeiungen aus der Romanwelt, und nun sind die bösen Geister im stalinistischen Gulag ebenso tätig wie in den Konzentrationslagern der Nazis. Als schließlich Teile der protestierenden Studentenschaft von 1968 in den Untergrund gehen und die Bundesrepublik mit gewaltsamen Mitteln bekämpfen wollen, liegt die Ähnlichkeit zur Situation in Russland genau einhundert Jahre zuvor doch wohl ebenso auf der Hand. Und Jan Philipp Reemtsma kann behaupten, dass sich die Charaktere aus Dostoevskijs *Dämonen* in der RAF alle wiederfänden.⁶ Wenn man mit dieser Konsequenz voranschreitet, sollte es nicht schwer fallen, den islamistischen Terroristen genauso wie den wutgetriebenen sächsischen Pegida-Aktivisten in Dostoevskijs Romanwelt bereits vorgeprägt zu finden. Irgendwann allerdings erscheint dann jedoch die Frage nach der Sinnhaftigkeit solcher Vergleiche berechtigt. Offensichtlich teilen weder Reemtsma noch Glucksmann Dostoevskijs Auffassung, dass der schändliche westlich-europäische sozialistische Gedanke unbedingt bekämpft werden müsse, bevor er mit seinen gottlosen Ideen die hilflose russische Jugend endgültig überrumpele und zu Mördern machen werde. Was die beiden modernen, eher linksorientierten Intellektuellen interessiert – und darin sind sie als typisch für diese Art der Aufschlüsselung des prophetischen Gehalts in Literatur zu sehen –, ist das vom russischen Dichter beschriebene sozialpsychologische Phänomen, die Entdeckung eines sozialen Mechanismus', der in der Literatur viel

⁵ Vgl. dazu das sechste Kapitel „Revolution. Sozialismus“ in Berdjaevs Essay „Die Weltanschauung Dostoevskijs“ (N. Berdjaev: Mirosozercanie Dostoevskogo. Prag 1923. S. 134–162, besonders S. 134/35).

⁶ Vgl. Jan Philipp Reemtsma: Lust an Gewalt, in Die Zeit, 8. März 2007.

anschaulicher aufbereitet worden ist, als es eine wissenschaftliche Abhandlung jemals leisten könnte.

In diesem Punkt unterscheiden sich jüngere Ausdeutungen der Prophetie Dostoevskijs von den klassischen Texten eines Berdajevs oder auch Fedor Stepuns⁷: diese griffen, durchaus im Sinne Dostoevskijs, die sozialistische Ideologie – in der Leninschen Fassung – direkt als verderbenbringende Verirrung an und setzten die christliche Religion oder besser ein erneuertes orthodoxes Christentum als Ausweg dagegen. Für die illusionslosen (und gottlosen?) Intellektuellen Glucksmann und Reemtsma aber, oder um genauer zu sein, für Intellektuelle, die ihre Ideale und Illusionen verloren haben, sind Ideologien an sich nur hohle Rechtfertigungsversuche eines narzisstischen Machtwillens. Politische, religiöse oder sonstige Motive der Verschwörer dienten allein als Legitimationsversuche eines von Hass gesteuerten Vernichtungstrebens. Die terroristische Gewalt wird von beiden als eigene Lebensform, separiert von den Botschaften der Täter, untersucht. Das *Tertium comparationis*, das solche historisch und ideologisch entfernt stehenden Phänomene wie die russische sozialistische Jugend der 60er Jahre des 19. Jahrhunderts und den modernen islamistischen Terror seit Beginn des 21. Jahrhunderts zusammenführt, ist der Nihilismus, der bei Glucksmann zum zentralen Begriff seines Essays wird. Allerdings: nicht der Nihilismus eines Jean Paul, das „Niemand, Nirgend, Nie“, auch nicht Nietzsches Nihilismus, den der Übermensch erkennend durchleiden muss, bevor er neue Werte setzen kann. Grundlage ist vielmehr eine Interpretation des Nihilismus, die im gewaltsamen Töten und Zerstören die einzig mögliche Sinnggebung der eigenen Existenz erfährt. Der Nihilismus ist in dieser Auslegung keine metaphysische Herausforderung für den denkenden Menschen, sondern wird ohne Umwege mit *dem* Bösen schlechthin gleichgesetzt. Glucksmanns Ausführungen ähneln deshalb über weite Strecken einer Abhandlung zum Theodizeeproblem, vor allem, wenn man an die Stelle des christlichen Gottes das Projekt der Aufklärung setzt.

Im Folgenden sollen nur einige Aspekte der Argumentation, mit der Dostoevskij nach Manhattan transportiert wird, kritisch durchleuchtet werden. Denn vorab möchte ich bemerken, dass Glucksmanns Essay ganz allgemein besser charakterisiert werden kann, wenn man ihn etwa mit dem Untertitel „Wie uns die fiktionale europäische Literatur des 19. und 20.

⁷ Vgl. Fedor Stepun: *Der Bolschewismus und die christliche Existenz*. München 1962, siehe hier besonders das Kapitel „Dostojewskijs prophetische Analyse der bolschewistischen Revolution“. Vgl. auch Gudrun Braunsperger: *Sergej Načaeu und Dostoevskijs „Dämonen“*. Die Geburt eines Romans aus dem Geist des Terrorismus. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2002.

Jahrhunderts helfen kann, den Islamismus zu verstehen“, versehen würde, denn Flaubert, Čechov und Ernst Jünger werden ebenfalls viel Platz eingeräumt. Die Čechovlektüre kann dabei sogar als ursprünglicher Impuls für das Verfassen der Abhandlung gedeutet werden. Glucksmann bekennt, dass er selbst, an dem Tage, als die ersten Bilder von den Flugzeugen, die in die Zwillingstürme flogen, verbreitet wurden, in die Lektüre von Čechovs *Kirschgarten* (Višněvyj sad, 19003/04) vertieft gewesen sei. Dabei sei ihm die Situation auf dem Gut der Ranevskaja zu einem Sinnbild für den Zustand des Westens, speziell Europas, geworden: ein allgemeines Vorgefühl des Zusammenbruchs sei spürbar, aber man vermeide bewusst jedes Gespräch darüber und ergehe sich stattdessen in schwelgerischen nostalgischen Rückblicken und glaube noch immer an eine Überlegenheit, die jeder realistischen Grundlage entbehre. Bereits diese kurze Bemerkung offenbart die problematische Einstellung des französischen Essayisten zum modernen islamistischen Terror ganz allgemein, der hier aus einer konsequent eurozentristischen Sichtweise heraus gedeutet wird: Terror und Gewalt sind damit nur erklärbar als Reaktion einer vormodernen oder zivilisatorisch auf einer anderen Stufe stehenden Gesellschaft auf die Konfrontation mit dem Westen und ihren liberalen Werten. In diese Dichotomie werden nun diverse historische Fakten eingepasst, wobei diesen auch selbst Gewalt angetan werden kann: dem Geschichtsforscher läuft es an manchen Stellen kalt den Rücken herunter, wenn Glucksmann zum Beispiel die Attentäter von New York als im Westen wohlausgebildete Elite des Orients bezeichnet und sie darin mit dem preußischen Offizierskorps und den von Černyševskij und Lenin geforderten revolutionären Zellen vergleicht als ‚Praktiker der Apokalypse‘ (33/34, 27).

Die Leitthese Glucksmanns lautet kurz gefasst, dass ‚wir im Westen‘ den islamistischen Terror nicht richtig verstehen, wenn wir seinen Nährboden in uns Europäern vormodern anmutenden, vielleicht sogar rückständigen patriarchalischen Gesellschaften wie in Afghanistan oder Pakistan vermuten. Er sei stattdessen ein ganz und gar modernes Phänomen, dass der Westen sich selbst herangezüchtet habe und vor dem er nun seine Augen verschließen wolle. Dementsprechend geht Glucksmann in seinen ersten Kapiteln, in denen der Wesenskern des Terrorismus offengelegt werden soll, zunächst nur auf historische Entwicklungen des Westens ein. Terrorismus, Revolution und Nihilismus beschreiben eigentlich unterschiedliche Dinge, hier aber werden sie fast synonym verwandt. Sie wollen demnach die Grenzen der Gewalt verschieben, die natürlichen Hemmungen des Menschen vor dem Töten in immer breiterem

Maßstab auflösen. Es soll der maximale Schrecken erreicht, die Öffentlichkeit in maximale Angst versetzt werden. Für den Franzosen wird Napoleon zu einem der Ersten, der in der Neuzeit die Grenzen der kriegerischen Gewalt verschoben habe. Glucksmann argumentiert hier und an vielen anderen Stellen mit Clausewitz, der im Rückblick auf die napoleonischen Kriege bereits prophezeit hatte, dass eine Rückkehr zu den begrenzten Kabinettskriegen des 18. Jahrhunderts nach Bonaparte kaum mehr möglich sein werde.⁸ Irritierend ist an dieser Stelle, dass nicht etwa die Phase des Grand Terreur unter Robespierre als Nukleus des modernen Terrorismus gekennzeichnet wird, sondern die allumfassende Mobilisierung und den vergleichslosen Einbezug der Zivilbevölkerung, die für die napoleonischen Kriege charakteristisch sind. Erst dadurch sei der totale Krieg, die vollkommene Vernichtungsstrategie denkbar geworden. Nun handelt es sich bei dem Essay ja nicht um eine Geschichte der modernen Kriegsführung. Aber Glucksmann ist in seiner Argumentation trotzdem konsequent: ihm geht es nicht um die bloße Deskription, er will selber mobilisieren. Terrorismus ist für ihn der Krieg gegen die Humanität allgemein, gegen die Errungenschaften der Aufklärung, die jedem einzelnen Menschen das Recht auf körperliche Unversehrtheit und politische und geistige Freiheit zusichern. Und in diesem Krieg hätten die zerstörerischen Kräfte des Nihilismus jeweils unterschiedliche Masken aufgesetzt und in ihrem Kampf die Grenzen der Gewalt immer weiter getrieben.

9/11 wird so zu einer „Schlacht“ in einem bereits seit Jahrhunderten währenden Krieg gegen den mündigen Staatsbürger, gegen den „Citoyen“ Rousseaus oder den „Graždanin“ Nekrasovs (18, 15), der in der modernen Großstadt zuhause ist. In diesem Krieg komme es dabei zu einer zunehmenden Zahl von Opfern unter den Zivilisten. Denn totalitäre und diktatorisch geführte Staaten beziehen die Stadt, die in traditionellen und konventionellen Kriegen bis dahin keine besondere Aufmerksamkeit hatte,

⁸ Vgl. die bekannten Stellen aus *Vom Kriege* im achten Buch: „Seit Bonaparte also hat der Krieg, indem er zuerst auf der einen Seite, dann auch auf der anderen wieder Sache des ganzen Volkes wurde, eine ganze andere Natur angenommen, oder vielmehr, er hat sich seiner wahren Natur, seiner absoluten Vollkommenheit sehr genähert. [...] Ob es nun immer so bleiben wird, ob alle künftigen Kriege in Europa immer mit dem ganzen Gewicht der Staaten und folglich nur um große, den Völkern naheliegende Interessen geführt sein werden, oder ob nach und nach wieder eine Absonderung der Regierung von dem Volke eintreten wird, dürfte schwer zu entscheiden sein, und am wenigsten wollen wir uns eine solche Entscheidung anmaßen. Aber man wird uns recht geben, wenn wir sagen, daß Schranken, die gewissermaßen nur in der Bewußtlosigkeit dessen, was möglich sei, lagen, wenn sie einmal eingerissen sind, sich nicht leicht wieder aufbauen lassen, [...]“. (Zitiert nach C. v. Clausewitz: *Vom Kriege*. Berlin 1980, S. 457. Die Begriffsverschiebung von „absoluter Krieg“, wie bei Clausewitz, zu „totaler Krieg“, wie bei Glucksmann, ist dabei problematisch.

in den Krieg ein um größtmöglichen Schrecken in der Bevölkerung zu erwecken. „Die antiurbane Strategie ist die Lieblingsoption totalitärer Gewalt.“ (24, 19) An dieser Stelle möchte man gerade als Deutscher kurz nachhaken, wenn von Guernica über Warschau die Reihe fortgesetzt wird zu Phnom Penh, Kigali, Sarajevo und Groznyj. Haben allein totalitäre und/oder diktatorische Regime Terror gegen die Zivilbevölkerung in Städten verübt? Allerdings taucht gerade in diesem Zusammenhang der erste konkrete Verweis auf Dostoevskijs *Dämonen* auf. Gemeint sind die Worte Petr Verchovenskijs, aus dem Kapitel „Ivan Carevič“: „Wir werden die Zerstörung verkündigen ... und warum, warum, wiederum darum, es ist so eine faszinierende Idee! [...] Wir werden Brandstiftungen veranlassen ... Wir werden Legenden in Umlauf setzen [...] Ein solches Beben wird sich ereignen, wie es die Welt noch nie gesehen hat ... “ [Auslassungen im frz. Text von A.G.] (Hier 24, 19).⁹

Zu dieser Stelle, die im Essay nur stark verkürzt wiedergegeben ist, wird gleich noch einiges zu sagen sein, denn sie taucht als Beleg eigentlich in allen jüngeren Studien auf, die Dostoevskij ein prophetisches Potential bezüglich des modernen Terrorismus unterstellen. Zuallermeist wird dann auf die Selbstentlarvung verwiesen, die sich hier offenbart: es ginge den Nihilisten nicht um den Kampf für ein zukünftiges Glück, sondern allein um „Zerstörung“ (razrušenie), eine passende Legende oder Ideologie lasse sich dazu immer finden. Auch Glucksmann nimmt diesen Faden auf. Die Ziele, die die jeweiligen Terroristen vorgäben zu verfolgen, seien nur Legenden, im Kern bleibe die gleiche Ausrichtung auf das Töten zur Bestätigung der Sinnhaftigkeit der eigenen Existenz, der pervertierte cartesianische Grundsatz „Ich töte, also bin ich“ (ebd.). Glucksmann spricht zwar von atheistischen und von religiösen Nihilisten, streng genommen ein Widerspruch in sich, aber beide Typen konzentrierten sich auf den Gedanken, dass der von ihnen zugefügte gewaltsame Tod ein Beweis für die Existenz eines zornigen Gottes sei. Einmal ist dieser Gott verortet in der Transzendenz, Allah, Jehova oder wie auch immer, einmal in der Immanenz als Menschengott, als vergöttlichtes Ich, das Kirillov beschwört. Alle übrigen Aspekte des Göttlichen wie Liebe, Barmherzigkeit und Weisheit würden in dieser nihilistischen Gottsicht ausgeblendet. Es bleibe nur ein zorniger, rasender und strafender Gott, dem sowohl die religiösen wie auch die atheistischen Nihilisten verfallen seien. Für den

⁹ Glucksmann nutzt für seinen Essay die französische Übersetzung der *Dämonen* von Sylvie Luneau und Boris de Schlöezer, die in der Reihe der Pléiade bei Gallimard erschienen ist. Die deutschen Übersetzungen (nach dem russischen Original) stammen hier und im Folgenden vom Verfasser.

Nihilisten stelle Gott allein der Genius der Sintflut dar. Der Nihilist blende dabei komplett das schöpferische Potential als göttliche Komponente, die Fähigkeit der *creatio ex nihilo* aus zugunsten der Macht zur *annihilatio*. Unwillkürlich denkt man hier an Horst-Jürgen Gerigks Ausführungen zu Stawrogins kreativem Nihilismus: der Fürst erschafft in und durch seine Schüler Šatov, Kirillov und Verchovenski eine Welt, die sich durch Mord, Selbstmord und Flucht ins Ausland wiederum selbst aufhebt.¹⁰

Glucksmann will mit Hilfe Dostoevskijs in die Psyche des Terroristen eindringen um dessen wahre Absichten zu entblößen. Demnach, fährt er fort, beziehe sich der Nihilist auf Religion oder Ideologie nur im Sinne Pierre Bourdieus in einem performativen Akt. Etwa so wie das Zepter in der Antike den Worten desjenigen, der es in der Hand hielt, eine besondere Macht und Autorität gab, so könne der Nihilist in der Anmaßung, ein herausragender Vertreter des Glaubens oder der Ideologie zu sein, darauf hoffen, dass die Gesellschaft seinen Worten und Taten eine besondere Bedeutung zuweise. Raskolnikovs Tat ist im Verweis auf Napoleon etwas Größeres als nur ein Raubmord –, der Täter mag selber glauben, dass dem so ist, aber es bleibt letztlich doch nur die Zerstörungstat eines brutalen Raubmords. (vgl. 132/33, 103/04) Die napoleonische Idee, die Idee Rothschilds und die des Großinquisitors, die Dostoevskij allesamt entlarvt habe als Masken des Nihilismus, behauptet Glucksmann nun, bestimmten gerade heute die Mechanismen der Globalisierung, das „Alles ist erlaubt“ um einen militärischen Sieg, persönlichen Reichtum und politische Herrschaft zu erlangen. Jeder Verweis auf eine ideale übergeordnete Instanz müsse als reines Mittel zum Zweck in den Händen des Nihilisten begriffen werden: „Alle diese zahlreichen Verweise auf eine ‚erlösende‘ und ‚reine‘ Wesenheiten – Nation, Geist, Klasse, Rasse, rechtgläubige Gemeinschaft, Ordnung der Dinge, ökonomische Gesetzmäßigkeiten, der Wille des Allerhöchsten – sind im Gebrauch beliebig austauschbar und dienen einzig und allein der Rechtfertigung der zerstörerischen Energie.“ In seiner Bewunderung für Dostoevskijs Klarsicht auf den Nihilismus geht Glucksmann dann noch weiter. Dieser habe nämlich bereits den seltsamen Zusammenhang von Glauben und Zerstören erkannt und beschrieben. Demnach sei der Terrorist durchaus kein kalter Zyniker und reiner Machtmensch: Die Zerstörung der alten Welt beinhalte keineswegs die Zerstörung des menschlichen Willen zum Glauben überhaupt. Das

¹⁰ Vgl. Horst-Jürgen Gerigk: Stawrogins kreativer Nihilismus. Dostojewskijs Paradoxon in den „Dämonen“. In: Edith Düsing und Hans-Dieter Klein (Hrsg.): Geist und Literatur. Modelle der Weltliteratur von Shakespeare bis Celan. Mit einer Einleitung von Annette und Linda Simonis. Würzburg 2008, S. 155–165.

besondere Verdienst Dostoevskijs liege darin, in den *Dämonen* gezeigt zu haben, dass es so ein paradoxes Phänomen wie eine Glaubensgemeinschaft der Nihilisten gebe. Eine Gruppe von Zerstörern werde vor allem durch ein gemeinsam begangenes Verbrechen zu einer Gemeinschaft. Das Paradox besteht hier vor allem in der mystischen Bande, die durch das gemeinsame Blutvergießen entsteht, und dem kalten rationalen Zweck, der in logischer Unerbittlichkeit den Mord herbeiführt, letztlich also das Zusammenfallen von Ratio und Mysterium in den Taten der Nihilisten. Und von hier aus weitergehend habe Dostoevskij erkannt, dass gerade die Nihilisten eine „Führerfigur“ benötigten, auf den sie sich beziehen können. Dieser kultisch verehrte, aber innerlich tote charismatische Anführer, lässt andere für sich töten und sich umbringen und garantiert im Gegenzug die Rechtmäßigkeit und Sinnhaftigkeit ihrer Verbrechen für das höhere Ziel. So kann Stavrogin auch ein Vorläufer Lenins, Stalins, Hitlers, Andreas Baaders, Osama bin Ladens und, in der Gegenwart angekommen, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadis, des Kalifs des IS, werden (vgl. 137,107).

Die erkennbar mit einer glühenden Feder geschriebenen Auslassungen des französischen Philosophen sind noch weitaus umfangreicher, als es hier in der gebotenen Kürze dargestellt werden konnte. Sie stehen am Anfang einer ganzen Reihe von Arbeiten, in denen zur Klärung des islamistischen Terrors auf den russischen Schriftsteller verwiesen wird. Mir persönlich gefällt unter diesen Erklärungsansätzen am meisten die lapidare Aussage James Woods, der auf die Frage, warum Dostoevskijs Werke diesbezüglich heute noch relevant sind, geantwortet hat: „First of all, his work attracts lunatics“.¹¹ Nina Straus erkennt des weiteren erstaunliche Gemeinsamkeiten im Lebenslauf Stavrogins und Osama bin Ladens: beides schwarze Schafe in einer reichen Familie, beide im westlichen Ausland erzogen, beide ursprünglich der westlichen Dekadenz gegenüber nicht abgeneigt und vom Typus durchaus als „Womanizer“ zu bezeichnen, aber beiden wird auch schon früh eine charismatische Ausstrahlung bescheinigt: „The parallels continue down to details of personality. Both Stavrogin and bin Laden fascinate their disciples with their controlled violence and stereotypical masculinity.“¹² Dostoevskij hat in seinen *Dämonen* anscheinend tatsächlich den Prototyp des gewissenlosen Terroristenführers geschaffen.

¹¹ James Wood: Warning notes from underground. In: The Guardian, 26.02.2005, online aufrufbar unter <<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2005/feb/26/featuresreviews.guardianreview33>> - letzter Zugriff 14.02.2019.

¹² Nina Pelikan Straus: From Dostoevsky to Al-Qaeda. What Fiction says to Social Science. In: Common Knowledge 12 (2006), 2, S. 197–213, hier S. 210.

Doch scheint ein gewisses Unwohlsein über die Zulässigkeit solcher Vergleiche ebenso gerechtfertigt zu sein. Am pointiertesten ist eine Kritik daran vielleicht durch Slavoj Žižek formuliert worden. Für Dostoevskij wäre demnach der Ursprung des Terrorismus in der vorgeblichen Erkenntnis zu sehen, dass alles erlaubt sei, wenn es keinen Gott gäbe. Für den modernen islamistischen Terror gelte jedoch genau das Gegenteil: „the lesson of today’s terrorism is that *if God exists*, then everything, including blowing up thousands of innocent bystanders, is permitted”.¹³ Tatsächlich bleiben in Glucksmanns schlichter Schwarz-Weiß Argumentation – die lichten Kräfte der Aufklärung einerseits, die Zerstörungskräfte eines antimodernistischen Ressentiments andererseits – eine ganze Reihe von Aspekten unberücksichtigt. Zunächst ist der Nihilismusbegriff viel facettenreicher, als er uns hier präsentiert wird. Es fiel zum Beispiel schwer Bazarov aus Turgenevs *Väter und Söhne* als Terrorist zu bezeichnen, denn seine sicherlich provozierenden Ansichten werden nirgendwo mit einem Programm für politische Gewalt oder gar einem Aufruf dazu in Verbindung gebracht. Erst durch Bakunin und Nečaevs Programmschrift *Katechismus eines Revolutionärs* ist die Verbindung der Nihilisten zum Terrorismus offenbar geworden, aber eben auch nur als ein theoretisches Programm. Der Mord an dem Gesinnungsgenossen Ivanov findet zwar statt, aber dieser kann kaum als terroristischer Akt gesehen werden.

Dostoevskij beschreibt in diesem Sinne in seinen *Dämonen* deshalb auch keinen Terrorismus, den er, vielleicht abgesehen von den missglückten Aktionen der ersten „Zemlja i volja“ Gruppe, den sogenannten Išutincy, noch gar nicht kannte. Die jungen Bombenwerfer waren Anfang der 70er Jahre noch nicht losgezogen, um den Zaren oder einen seiner Beamten gewaltsam zu ermorden und man kann wohl behaupten, dass ein tröstender Aspekt an Dostoevskijs Tod im Februar 1881 die Tatsache ist, dass erst einen guten Monat später der Technikstudent Ignacy Hryniewiecki jene Granate warf, die dem Zaren Alexander II. den Tod gebracht hat. Obwohl es natürlich auch bedauerlich ist: was für einen Roman hätte Dostoevskij wohl geschrieben über das Ereignis, dass ein katholischer Pole mit dem Spitznamen „Kotik“ (Kätzchen) wegen seines weichen Charakters als Mitglied einer sozialistischen Gruppe, die sich „Volkswillen“ (narodnaja volja) nennt, den russischen Zaren ermordet hat. Vielleicht hätte ja in der Fortsetzung der *Brüder Karamasow* Aljoscha

¹³ Slavoj Žižek: Defenders of the Faith. In: The New York Times, 12.03.2006, online aufrufbar unter <<https://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/12/opinion/defenders-of-the-faith.html>> - letzter Zugriff 14.02.2019.

diesen Zarenmörder spielen sollen, wie Igor Volgin es vermutet.¹⁴ In den *Dämonen* aber ist diese Art von Terrorismus noch gar nicht ausgebreitet und deshalb, wie Margret Heller ganz richtig bemerkt, übertreibt Glucksmann ganz gewaltig, wenn er der Gruppe um Verchovenskiĭ unterstellt, sie nehme sich das Recht zu Mord, Brand und Umsturz heraus.¹⁵ (Heller, 90) Dafür sind die Mitglieder der revolutionären Gruppe, so wie diese am Geburtstag Virginskiĭs im Hause seiner Frau zusammenkommt, doch viel zu unentschlossen in ihren Plänen und Absichten und die Allermeisten würden vor einer solchen Radikalität, wie sie Glucksmann ihnen unterstellt, eher zurückschrecken.

Auf den wichtigsten Einwand gegen die Argumentationsstrategie Glucksmanns muss nun aber nochmals eingegangen werden. Er liegt in Dostoevskiĭ selbst, in seinen persönlichen politischen Ansichten einerseits und in seiner Poetik andererseits begründet. Der russische Autor zeigt sich in seinen publizistischen Schriften nämlich keinesfalls als Anhänger der von Glucksmann beschworenen Ideale der Aufklärung. Er steht nicht für die Demokratie, die geistige Freiheit des Individuums und ein tolerantes Miteinander gleichberechtigter mündiger Staatsbürger, sondern für ein reaktionäres hierarchisches Staatsverständnis, für nationalen, antiwestlichen Chauvinismus und religiösen Obskurantismus. Dostoevskiĭ mag die sozialistischen Revolutionäre in ihrem terroristischen und nihilistischen Wesenskern richtig erkannt haben, aber was er dagegen als Heil und Rettung setzen wollte, klingt in vielen Punkten nach einem Gottesstaat, der nicht weit entfernt ist von jüngeren islamistischen Wunschbildern.

Auf der anderen Seite aber ist Dostoevskiĭ ein genialer Schriftsteller. Und das beinhaltet immer auch, dass es höchst gefährlich ist Aussagen seiner Figuren aus fiktionalen Werken als kulturhistorische Fakten in die eigene Argumentation einzufügen. Wie bereits erwähnt ist Petr Verchovenskiĭs Gespräch aus dem achten Kapitel des zweiten Teils eine der wichtigsten Belegstellen für den „wahren Geist“ der revolutionären sozialistischen Jugend.¹⁶ Blickt man aber genau auf die Umstände, in denen dieser Dialog, der eher als ein Monolog Verchovenskiĭs zu bezeichnen ist, stattfindet, dann möchte ich behaupten, dass Dostoevskiĭ hier ein „Proto-

¹⁴ Vgl. Igor' Volgin: *Poslednij god Dostoevskogo. Istoričeskie zapiski*. Moskau 2010, S. 38: „Не исключено, что мысль об Алёше-царевубийце присутствовала у Достоевского с самого начала“ (Es ist nicht auszuschließen, dass Dostoevskiĭ schon von Anfang an den Gedanken hatte, Aljoscha werde zum Zarenmörder.)

¹⁵ Vgl. Margaret Heller: *Dostoyevsky on Terror and the Question of the West*. In: *Terror and the Arts. Artistic, Literary, and Political Interpretations of Violence from Dostoyevsky to Abu Ghraib*. Ed. by M. Hyvärinen and L. Muszynski. New York 2008, S. 83–96.

¹⁶ Vgl. PSS, T. 10, S. 319–326, folgende Zitate ebd.

Teufelsgespräch“ ausgeführt hat, so wie er es später in expliziter Form Ivan in den *Brüdern Karamasov* erleben lässt und so wie es Adrian Leverkühn in Thomas Manns *Dr. Faustus* passiert. Michael Wegner charakterisiert Ivan Karamazovs Teufel wie folgt: „Der Teufel Ivans ist sein ‚domašnyj čert‘, sein ‚Hausteufel‘, der im Prinzip Ivan nichts Neues zu sagen hat und selbst zugeben muss, dass er nur gibt, ‚was er kann‘. ‚Du bist meine Halluzination‘, so charakterisiert Ivan seinen Gesprächspartner. ‚Du bist die Verkörperung meiner selbst, von mir selber, übrigens nur einer Seite von mir ... von meinen Gedanken und Gefühlen, freilich nur von den allerekligsten und dümmsten.‘ Der Teufel als ein Teil Ivans kann im Gespräch keine neuen, bedeutenden Positionen setzen.“¹⁷ Sieht man Petr Verchovenskiĭ als „Hausteufelchen“ Stavrogins, so passt diese Beschreibung auch sehr gut auf ihn. Schon die Kapitelüberschrift „Ivan-Carevič“ deutet auf den Antichristen hin, auch wenn Stavrogin später so betitelt wird. Nach der hitzigen Diskussion bei den „Unsrigen“ und einer kurzen Visite in Kirillovs Zimmer, zu der Fed’ka Katoržnik wie ein bedrohlicher Dämon hinzukommt, passt Pjotr Nikolaj auf der Straße ab und der Fürst glaubt einen ganz anderen Menschen als noch kurz zuvor im Zimmer zu erblicken („Ставрогин взглянул на него [Петр Верховенский] наконец и был поражен. Это был не тот взгляд, не тот голос, как всегда или как сейчас там в комнате; он видел почти другое лицо.“). Er stößt ihn mit Gewalt von sich, doch Petr nähert ihm sich unterwürfig und geifernd immer wieder neu und bietet ihm als erstes ... eine Frau an, Lizavetta („Слушайте, я вам завтра же приведу Лизавету Николаевну, хотите?“). Fortan übernimmt er die Rolle des Verführers. Die sexuelle Verlockung rahmt gleichsam das ungeheuerliche Zerstörungsszenario mit der Aussicht auf absolute Macht ein, denn am Ende des Gesprächs ruft Petr Nikolaj wiederum zu: „... и завтра же приведу к вам Лизу. Хотите Лизу, завтра же?“

Der junge Verchovenskiĭ formuliert in seinen langatmigen Ausführungen keine eigenen Gedanken, sondern fasst die Ideen der vorherigen Diskussionen zusammen und bietet sie Stavrogin wie auf einem Tablett an. Es ist so, als sähen wir Stavrogins herausgelegte Gedankenwelt, die das zuvor Gesagte und das vor der Romanhandlung an Petr herangetragene Ideengut nochmals durchspielt. Und Stavrogin erkennt, wie Ivan in Bezug auf Smerdjakov und den Vätermord, dass seine theoretischen Erwägungen fatale Konsequenzen in der Wirklichkeit haben. Das ständige Davonrennen

¹⁷ Michael Wegner: Zu den Teufelsgestalten bei Thomas Mann und Fedor Dostoevskiĭ. In: *Dostoevsky Studies* 9 (1988), S. 33–43, hier S. 39.

und Vorseilen Nikolajs vor seinem Gesprächspartner bei diesem seltsamen Dialog im Gehen können durchaus symbolisch gesehen werden als Davonlaufen vor den Konsequenzen der eigenen Ideen, die ihn jedoch wieder einholen. Dabei kommt Stavrogin selbst kaum zu Wort, sondern er versucht nur herauszufinden, wer da eigentlich genau mit ihm spricht („С ним лихорадка, и он бредит; с ним что-то случилось очень особенное“), und nicht zufällig taucht der Teufel (чёрт) in diesem Kapitel mehrmals leibhaftig in Buchstabengestalt auf (z.B. Nikolaj zu Petr: „Да на что я вам, наконец, черт!“).

Petr Verchovenskij erscheint an dieser zentralen Stelle des Romans also mehr als ein Mephisto, denn als ein selbstzerstörerischer Fanatiker. Seine Allmachtsphantasien, von Stavrogin genährt, sind in einem engen christlich-religiösen Kontext zu lesen und nicht als Manifestation einer gewaltverherrlichenden, antiwestlichen und antiaufklärerischen politischen Grundhaltung. Ganz gewiss aber liegt für Dostoevskij der Ursprung des Nihilismus in jenem Wesen, das von sich sagt: „Ich bin *der Geist, der stets verneint!* Und das mit Recht; denn alles, was entsteht, Ist wert, dass es zugrunde geht.“

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Becoming a Rothschild: Trading Narrative in *Podrostok*

Dostoevsky's teenager is, like Dostoevsky himself, an experimenter in narrative value. In his ambition to 'become a Rothschild,' Arkady Dolgoruky uses an analogy we can all understand, now as in Dostoevsky's time. The tag 'Rothschild' has instantly comprehensible meaning, a predictable value. But are other forms of narrative as easily legible? And is any narrative of predictable value an appropriate way of describing a confusing and unpredictable universe? This article argues that by presenting a text in which the 'value' of narrative is constantly foregrounded Dostoevsky forces his readers to ask themselves how they value the narrative they are reading.

Podrostok was, of course, a transaction even before it was written. In early 1874, when work on the novel began, Dostoevsky switched publishers, from Katkov and *The Russian Messenger* to Nekrasov and *Notes from the Fatherland*. The move seems to have been driven primarily by economics – Nekrasov was offering slightly more per printer's sheet than Katkov. But in changing publication Dostoevsky was also switching readership, from Katkov's conservative nationalism to the more radical populist line of Nekrasov, with which his sympathies were limited.¹ So *Podrostok* is, in many senses, a text which had to justify its value to a new readership, to a new publisher, and possibly even to Dostoevsky himself.

At no point in Dostoevsky's lifetime did a mass readership exist in Russia. Abram Reitblat, relying on contemporary reports, estimates a core readership of no more than 20,000 at the beginning of the 1860s, supplemented by a wider occasional audience of those with secondary

¹ See Joseph Frank, *Dostoevsky, The Mantle of the Prophet 1871–1881* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), pp. 133–142, for an account of the publishing context of *Podrostok*.

education of up to 250,000.² By contrast, in other parts of Europe, particularly in England and in France, progress towards a mass readership was far more advanced, based both on the spread of education, urbanisation and literacy and on the development of publishing strategies to develop this new market.³ Yet for several decades Russian publishers had been avidly following developments and importing publishing innovations particularly from the French market, and more particularly from the genre of the boulevard newspaper, despite the absence of anything remotely resembling the nature and scale of the French readership.⁴

Added to this, the political and economic upheaval caused by the Great Reforms evolved into a wave of attempted industrialisation in the early 1870s which, for a time at least, must have seemed like the end of the old peasant way of life.⁵ It must have been virtually impossible for any Russian writer of the time to have a clear idea of who he or she was writing for - the narrow audience of a few thousand readers of the journal in which serialised publication took place, a putative wider audience which neither the original journal nor a subsequent book format edition would penetrate significantly, or some possible future mass readership offering the prize of artistic immortality but certainly not paying the bills of the moment.

Critical responses to *Podrostok* are only now beginning to pay attention to the new dimensions which a consideration of its publishing context opens up. Joseph Frank diligently establishes the publishing and political contexts of its conception, but then treats the work as a kind of aberrant rehearsal for *Brat'ya Karamazovy* in which the only interest lies in the religious and moral precepts voiced largely by Versilov and Makar. He dismisses the plot as full of 'the most shop-worn devices of the penny dreadful' without asking why Dostoevsky, by then a very experienced writer, should have felt the need to experiment with such generic

² Abram Reitblat, *Ot Bovy k Bal'montu. Ocherki po istorii chteniya v Rossii vo vtoroi poloviny XIX veka* (Moscow: MPI, 1991), pp. 11–12.

³ See, for example, *La Civilisation du journal*, ed. by Dominique Kalifa, Philippe Régner, Marie-Eve Thérénty and Alain Vaillant (Paris: Nouveau monde éditions, 2011), pp. 23–212 in relation to the French press, or Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader. A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800–1900*, second edition (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998), pp. 260–364 in relation to the English market.

⁴ See Reitblat 1991, pp. 8–128 for an analysis of the development of the Russian readership and press context over the second half of the nineteenth century.

⁵ For an account of the aftermath of the Great Reforms see Bruce Lincoln, *The Great Reforms. Autocracy, Bureaucracy and the Politics of Change in Imperial Russia* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1990), pp. 159–192.

commonplaces.⁶ His approach is typical of others and beyond the scope of this article to examine. More recently Kate Holland has argued persuasively that only by understanding *Podrostok* in its literary and cultural context as a rejection of its own literary heritage can we properly appreciate its innovative approach. Depicting a fragmenting society requires a fragmenting, formless text, she argues, and both Arkady's and Dostoevsky's struggles with plot and novelistic structure betray the fundamental opposition between the need to keep readers on board and the urge to represent and replicate the disintegration of contemporary society.⁷ My own approach extends her analysis by showing how the economic aspects of the text reveal Dostoevsky's attempts to create a text capable of appealing to multiple readerships, both contemporary and future.

Narrative economics

In *Podrostok*, Dostoevsky establishes the close relationship between text and value from the start. In the very first chapter Arkady, introducing himself as narrator, painstakingly points out that his narrative has no pretensions to literary value. 'I'm no wordsmith,' he writes, 'and don't want to be – dragging my innermost secrets and most finely drawn feelings out into their literary marketplace I consider offensive and vulgar.'⁸ His denial, I suggest, has precisely the opposite effect: it sensitizes readers to the link between text and value. Five lines further on the narrator himself confirms his own awareness of the point: '...something I place value on may well have no value at all to anyone else.'⁹ Through his narrator, Dostoevsky thus betrays his own preoccupation with text as both literary and economic agent.

While Arkady argues here for figurative value, it soon becomes literal. Arkady secretly possesses a compromising letter which he plans to use as

⁶ Frank 2002, pp. 171–196. The quotation is at p. 161.

⁷ Kate Holland, *The Novel in the Age of Disintegration* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2013), pp. 101–130.

⁸ 'Я — не литератор, литератором быть не хочу и тащить внутренность души моей и красивое описание чувств на их литературный рынок почел бы неприличием и подлостью.' All quotations are taken from Fedor Dostoevsky, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii F.M.Dostoevskogo v XVIII tomakh*, 18 vols. and three supplementary volumes (Moscow: Voskresen'e, 2003–05, hereafter *PSS 2003–2005*) and are referred to by volume and page number in Roman and Arabic numerals respectively. This quotation is at x:7. All translations are my own.

⁹ '...то, что сам ценишь, очень возможно, не имеет никакой цены на посторонний взгляд' (x:7).

blackmail: the literal exchange of text for coin. Versilov is contesting a will, a text which will also make him literally rich if he wins. The first part of the novel begins and ends with two letters, i.e., transmitted texts. The first, the letter with which Arkady will attempt to blackmail Katerina Nikolaevna, begins as a riddle – what is it, we ask, before the content of the letter is revealed, that makes the text so valuable? The letter which closes the first part proves to Versilov that he was not the intended legatee of the inheritance he has just been awarded in court: by destroying the letter he can retain the value. He does the opposite, destroying value through preserving the text. So the story itself seems to ask how texts create, transmit and maintain value.

Gradually the reader becomes aware of a common thread. The exchange value for text, it seems, is quite random. Blackmail creates value only in the hands of a single targeted reader or group of readers: in other hands it loses its entire effect. The will similarly delivers only recipient-specific value, to the chosen legatee. Even this appears arbitrary as Versilov challenges the terms of the will, wins, then renounces his entire claim in response to the sudden appearance of another text which contradicts the basis of his challenge.

The theme continues as the plot develops. Arkady tries to earn money by trading an object bought at auction. The object he buys is another text, a quite nondescript album of no personal significance which he picks up for 2 roubles 5 kopeks. A few minutes later he resells it to a late buyer, to whom the album does mean something, for 10 roubles. It is difficult to think of a clearer way of representing the factitious and recipient-specific nature of textual value.

Dostoevsky's choice of transaction type is also significant. He uses four main variants: blackmail, speculation, theft and forgery. Blackmail is at the very core of the plot. Arkady blackmails Katerina Nikolaevna – or at least agonizes over whether to do so. Lambert runs a blackmail racket which he has exported from Moscow to St Petersburg. Blackmail is so prevalent that it is assumed even when not present: the young Prince Sergei assumes that the innocent Arkady is seeking his company not out of friendship but in expectation of hush money because he presumes Arkady knows he has seduced Arkady's sister. Speculation is a catalyst for both blackmail and forgery. Both Arkady and Sergei gamble. Arkady's chance winnings lead to the exposure of Sergei's relationship with his sister and thence to blackmail. Sergei's losses lead to his involvement in a plot to counterfeit railway company shares. The theft of part of Arkady's gambling

winnings leads to the theft of the compromising letter by the serial blackmailer, Lambert, and thus the *dénouement* which completes the plot.

The common themes that link these different types of transaction highlight the contingent nature of value. Gambling shows the arbitrary nature of determining exchange value. Blackmail demonstrates its relevance only to a single specific recipient. Forgery illustrates how easily texts can be manipulated to create fraudulent value. Theft displays the transitory nature of value creation and destruction.

Even on the rarer occasions when Dostoevsky depicts a more everyday type of transaction, such as wages for work, he makes the arrangement appear arbitrary and contentious. When Arkady secures a position as an aide to the old Prince Sokolsky, he expects to be paid a salary – but his employer evidently does not share that expectation and, when the matter is clarified and the salary paid, the job turns out not to exist (x:19-23, 29). This is, manifestly, a world in which the normal rules of economic exchange have been undermined and where texts, in particular, carry no hint of predictable value.

Becoming a Rothschild

It is this issue of the nature of textual value which, I suggest, Arkady is confronting when he describes his 'idea.'

Since his ambition is to become a Rothschild, it is perhaps worth reflecting on what this might have meant to Dostoevsky's contemporary audience. The reference is explicitly to James de Rothschild who had made his name both as the most prominent banker in France during the 1840s and 1850s and as one of the chief architects of the newly developing capital market in France. Popular legend and contemporary cartoons, though, depicted him as rapacious, alien and exploitative.¹⁰

A Russian readership in the 1870s would probably have had no more than this caricatured version to go on. In evoking this image Dostoevsky is thus relying on a metaphor of established signification with broad acceptance throughout his readership – in short, a literary device with predictable narrative value. It allies the representation of immense wealth and power with a mode of transmission, through caricature and stereotype,

¹⁰ See, for example, a slightly later caricature of James de Rothschild as a dog guarding his money-sacks in a rather nasty turn-of-the-century anti-Semitic publication called *Musée des Horreurs*: <<https://repository.duke.edu/dc/museedeshorreurs/mdhps01001048>>, accessed 25 February 2019.

which depends on exaggeration and melodrama for its effect. This alliance of the represented object with an associated genre transforms the analogy from simple comparison to a literary experiment. Arkady's idea in effect asks whether predictable reader reception is achievable in the contemporary literary market and, if so, whether it always requires this combination of stereotype and excess.

The hidden reader

Reader reception is more than an academic concern, both to Arkady and to Dostoevsky. Even at the mimetic level, readers lurk in the most unexpected places in *Podrostok*.

One of the key – and most overused – plot devices in *Podrostok* is that of the eavesdropper. Eavesdroppers, hidden recipients of the narratives of others, concealed readers, are everywhere. Arkady is a serial eavesdropper and some of the key turning points in the plot are revealed through secrets he overhears or lets slip. He hides behind curtains at Tatyana Pavlovna's apartment to hear Katerina Nikolaeva's anxiety over the missing letter which he, Arkady, has in his pocket (x:115–117). Tatyana Pavlovna is made to overhear his declaration of love to Katerina Nikolaevna (x:203). Arkady eavesdrops on Katerina's own declaration to Versilov that she no longer loves him (x:373–378). And in the novel's very *dénouement* both Lambert and Arkady listen serially in hiding to different parts of the scene which will lead to Lambert's unmasking and Versilov's wounding (x:402–403).

Eavesdropping is a well-established literary device. Othello, driven by Iago, overhears what he believes is proof of Desdemona's infidelity.¹¹ Jane Austen's Elizabeth Bennett overhears Darcy and Bingley discussing her,¹² Balzac's Raphaël de Valentin voyeuristically spies on Fœdora in her bedroom,¹³ Dostoevsky's own Mme Khokhlakova will energetically earwig on Alyosha and Lise's relationship.¹⁴ John Vernon, in one of the earliest works of economic criticism, *Money and Fiction*, points out its economic relevance. Eavesdropping, he says, is a mimetic representation

¹¹ William Shakespeare, *Othello*, act 4, scene 1, <<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1531/1531-h/1531-h.htm#A4S1>>, accessed 26 February 2019.

¹² Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, chapter 3, <<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1342/1342-h/1342-h.htm#link2HCH0001>>, accessed 25 February 2019.

¹³ Honoré de Balzac, *La Comédie Humaine*, ed. by Pierre-Georges Castex, 12 vols. (Paris: Gallimard-Pléiade, 1976), vol. x, pp. 179–185.

¹⁴ *PSS 2003–2005*, xiii:181.

of the exchange of the overheard narrative for the recipient's time, attention and credence. It mimics the process the reader must go through in receiving the narrative. In doing so it forces the reader to re-examine how he or she attributes – or denies – value to the narrative so received.¹⁵

By this criterion, any attempt to create predictable narrative value is doomed to fail. In this story, the recipients of the others' narratives continually misread and mislead. Arkady's very name, Dolgoruky, invites both misreading as a noble bloodline and misconstruction as an impostor. The plot hangs on Arkady's serial misreadings of Versilov's motives, and *vice versa*. Each provokes the other into repeated misunderstandings: Arkady suspects Versilov's relationship with Arkady's mother, believes he has had an affair with Lidya Akhmakova in Bad Ems, thinks he is implicated in the suicide of his landlady's daughter Olya. Each time his suspicions prove unfounded but fuel chapters of intrigue. His teenage hormones prompt him to mistransmit as much as he misreceives. Like any teenager, he commits gross faults of social interpretation, of appropriateness, of expectation which he admits with the benefit of novelistic hindsight: 'Reader, I am now beginning the story of my shame and disgrace, and nothing in the world could be more shameful than these memories.'¹⁶ The very idea of 'becoming a Rothschild,' of acquiring predictable narrative value, seems preposterous in this environment. Arkady's own attempt at amassing a fortune symbolically peters out before it has really begun.

The hidden author

If it is so difficult to control textual value, then what role does the author have? Dostoevsky, apparently perversely, responds by choosing a narratorial prism, that of the teenager, which depends on dislocation for its credibility. The original title of the work, *Disorder* (*Besporyadok*), indicates the theme's importance. The teenager's point of view relies on an imperfect understanding of cause and effect, imperfect experience of how the world works, and imperfect understanding of the business of authorship.

On one level the narrative accurately and persuasively represents the inconsistencies of teenager logic, a jumbled mixture of the penetrating

¹⁵ John Vernon, *Money and Fiction. Literary Realism in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), pp. 84–107.

¹⁶ 'Читатель, я начинаю теперь историю моего стыда и позора, и ничто в жизни не может для меня быть постыднее этих воспоминаний!' (x:149).

social insight of the outsider, the idealism of the unjaundiced mind and the wet-dream fantasy of the adolescent. On another, it provides Dostoevsky with the perfect excuse to shift the blame for any inadequacies of the narrative onto his avatar. Arkady's insistent protestations of literary incompetence not only characterize his inexperience, they license the use of subjects and genres which relate to his background and upbringing. Arkady's illegitimacy provides the excuse for spicy stories about Versilov's past – the seduction of his mother (x:95–99) or his reported affair with Lidya Akhmakova in Bad Ems (x:52–56). His adolescence serves as a pretext for stories about his first sight of a naked woman (x:25–28) and a drunken exploit with another student (x:71–73). His mixed social background allows him to co-exist in at least three strata of society and to peer voyeuristically into each – the aristocratic world of the Petersburg nobility, the twilight world of those, like Versilov, on its fringes, and the shady underworld of criminals and prostitutes – of Lambert, Alphonsine and Stebelkov.

Just as Arkady-as-character can cross social boundaries, so Arkady-as-narrator can cross genre thresholds. When narrative momentum is needed, the fast-paced, technicolour world of the boulevard newspaper is available to suggest an array of themes and devices. The plot involves not just blackmail, forgery, theft and cardsharpping but three suicides, at least two seductions, a morganatic marriage and a host of age-inappropriate relationships. His universe of schemers and fraudsters, aristocrats and peasants, seducers and child groomers would not look out of place in a novel by Eugène Sue. The blackmail plot is used, rather crudely, to create tension and provide cliffhanger endings to serialized episodes as knowledge of its existence spreads.¹⁷ In similar vein, the text is constructed as a blend of the styles of the boulevard newspaper and of the thick journal. When the plot needs to advance, the narrator uses journalistic modes of compression and melodrama. 'I am flying over a period of almost two months: the reader need not be concerned – all will become clear in due course.'¹⁸ Suspense is created by repeated narratorial warnings of impending doom, by references to 'the final catastrophe' or 'the three

¹⁷ As for example, in the finale to chapter 9 of part 2, which concluded the May 1875 instalment of *Podrostok*, in which Arkady dramatically falls into the clutches of the blackmailer Lambert after being accused of cheating at cards. As the chapter ends, Prince Sergei confesses to being a forger and Arkady lapses into unconsciousness.

¹⁸ 'Перелетаю пространство почти в два месяца; пусть читатель не беспокоится: всё будет ясно из дальнейшего изложения' (x:148).

fateful days with which my notes conclude.'¹⁹ The narrator manipulates timing to accelerate, retard or explain the fateful outcome, as in a prolepsis shortly before the denouement which allows him to reveal psychological insights which he as narrator only discovered later, but which are essential to the reader's understanding of the plot (x:350). The first-person narrative taps into a genre of confessional literature which anticipates titillating revelations. Other genres of popular literature feature too: the basic plot is that of a crime novel, with elements of psychological drama injected by the interactions between Arkady and Versilov.

Makar's story

These devices are consistent with Arkady's inexperience as a novelist and, perhaps, with the novel's own status as an experimental text. More serious readers might be put off by the obvious links to popular literature, so a way needed to be found to blend the more intellectual tone and content of the thick journal with the narrative motor force of the tabloid. The result demonstrates how hard this balance is to achieve. Joseph Frank's above-mentioned analysis of the text illustrates how a sophisticated reader searching for intellectual content can all but ignore (or, when noticed, deplore) the populist vein which accounts for the majority of the text.

In between the accelerations and decelerations of plot, Dostoevsky seems to feel he has an obligation to tackle weightier subjects, so characters suddenly become the mouthpieces for mini-essays on God, on atheism, on Russian nationalism. In one of the longer such episodes, Makar relates a revealing parable to his family shortly before his death. Its subject, a small-town despotic landowner, Maxim Ivanovich Skotoboinikov, refuses to save the family of a widowed serf. All the children except one die. In a sudden volte-face, Maxim Ivanovich adopts the surviving boy as his son and brings him up in luxury. But the boy remains terrified of his new father and, when he accidentally breaks an expensive ornament, the boy commits suicide. Maxim Ivanovich repents, memorializes the suicide in a commissioned painting, marries the mother and, when she in turn dies, becomes a pilgrim (x:283–290).

The story describes a chaotic world in which the random and the perverse rule. Maxim refuses the pleas of the destitute family (x:284), and

¹⁹ The full quotations are 'Теперь приступлю к окончательной катастрофе, завершающей мои записки' (x:192) and 'И вот так прошел для меня этот первый ужасный день из этих трех роковых последних дней, которыми завершаются мои записки' (x:363).

the adopted boy resists charitable assimilation (x:286). Repentance leads to further punishment (x:290). Until almost the very end Makar's story also upends reader expectations in this traditional genre: sin is not followed by punishment, nor repentance by reward. This parable mimetically reflects the dislocation, the *besporyadok*, of the society Arkady describes in the surrounding text.

But the parable is not just making a philosophical point: it is also a reflection on narrative value. Makar's tale is, undoubtedly, a good story. Why? I would argue that it achieves in miniature precisely that combination of intellectual weight and narrative pace, of thick journal and boulevard newspaper, which Dostoevsky seems to be seeking, through Arkady, in the novel as a whole.

The story's content places it in two literary traditions - melodrama and parable. It skillfully contrasts the melodramatic excess of its content with the simplicity of its narrator and the weight of its didactic message. It teems with the devices of the boulevard press: it leers with a voyeuristic frisson at the depravity of the peasant world; it depicts sensational crimes; it compresses years of outrage into a simple, direct story. Makar himself, as in-story narrator, comes from a long tradition of Russian holy fools, characters who bridge popular and religious genres. His story relies on well-established literary devices with predictable narrative values for readers. Even the unpredictability it depicts becomes a stock literary trope for creating shock value. Depicting dysfunctionality can become an act of successful aesthetic creation. The story combines elements which have predictable value in the hands of a wide range of readers with a narrative strategy, a 'manner of telling,' which reinforces its predictability.

Yet Makar's story seems to question whether such effective hierarchies remain valid outside of his narrow, self-consciously isolated world. Makar has deliberately removed himself, first from his family, then from society. His tale is told in private, only to family members. It is physically separated from the rest of the book, both as a separate chapter and as the only narrative in the novel told in a voice other than Arkady's. Do the rules which govern narrative value in this short episode hold good in the wider world?

Hedging bets

The short answer, I think, is that Dostoevsky does not find it easy to transfer the rules of the parable or the anecdote to the broader canvas of the

contemporary novel. He had already agonized over the problem almost a decade earlier in the pages of *Idiot*, where Prince Myshkin attempts, and eventually fails to establish, his credit and credibility through a series of anecdotes told to other in-story characters. His eventual discovery, that the worlds of fiction and philosophy meet best in an environment of excess, in the Gothic isolation of Rogozhin's house or in the chamber where Nastasya Filippovna's lies murdered, poses narratological problems which reverberate through all Dostoevsky's subsequent work.

Podrostok, like so many of Dostoevsky's novels, is an experiment in trying to deal with these problems. The text tries to hide its issues behind Arkady's teenage inexperience. Dostoevsky (rather belatedly) seems to suggest that this new style of unvarnished memoir simultaneously rejects outmoded literary styles and a contemporary world as dislocated as his teenager. Dostoevsky concludes the novel with his own critical review of the manuscript in the shape of a commentary from Arkady's previous mentor: 'What is a writer to do, who doesn't want just to write in one historical genre and who longs to write something modern? Try and try again – and accept the mistakes.'²⁰ The critic continues 'But it seems to me that 'Notes' like yours might conceivably provide the material for some future aesthetic creation, for a future representation - of a bygone age of disintegration.'²¹ This is the line that has been so successfully pursued by Kate Holland.

But let us consider another side to Dostoevsky's experimentalism. I suggest that this is Dostoevsky's first major attempt at developing what I might call a literary hedging strategy, a kind of insurance policy designed to produce a narrative capable of appealing at quite different levels to many different audiences.

Podrostok deals with subjects which had manifestly attracted previous readers, such as those of Tolstoy's *Detstvo*, but approaches them in a novel way which creates both an intellectual commentary on the previous form, through the implication that modernity requires genre diversity, and an innovative novelistic format through the prism of the unpolished, non-literary narrator. Dostoevsky's use of multiple genres is a technique which covers readers of quite different tastes. His recognition of the power of popular literature and the journalistic techniques of the boulevard press

²⁰ 'Но что делать, однако ж, писателю, не желающему писать лишь в одном историческом роде и одержимому тоской по текущему? Угадывать и ... ошибаться' (х:412).

²¹ 'Но такие „Записки“, как ваши, могли бы, кажется мне, послужить материалом для будущего художественного произведения, для будущей картины — беспорядочной, но уже прошедшей эпохи' (х:412).

ensures that the novel has pace and sensation, even if the result is a little labored at times. And the attempt to address issues of serious philosophical, religious and ethical weight recognizes the readership of the thick journals which would have been entirely used to the interpolation of fiction and essay, as well as laying claim to a more serious literary heritage than the more tabloid elements of the plot might suggest. This interpretation allows us to make sense of some elements of *Podrostok*'s construction. It is also consistent with Dostoevsky's move to a new publisher and a new readership for which he presumably needed to broaden his appeal.

Nonetheless, the strategy in this iteration seems far from a complete success. Arkady-as-narrator repeatedly and truculently expresses his embarrassment at his lack of literary skills: 'I repudiate much of what I've written, especially the tone of several phrases and passages, but I'm not crossing anything out or redrafting anything.'²² It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Dostoevsky, too, may also be a little unhappy with the results of his experiment. It is certainly true that the different genres of the work jar. The plot is difficult to remember, suggesting over-complexity, and the characters are far less sharply drawn than in his other major novels.

Therein may lie at least one explanation for the poor reader reception which *Podrostok* has historically received. Arkady's attempt to become a Rothschild depended on developing a narrative which could be universally and predictably understood. His narrative relied, as we have seen, on a combination of stereotype and excess, both of which it lacks. In a sense it is the antithesis of *Besy*, which deflated Nechaev's revolutionary terrorism to a squabbling band of small-town agitators but retained all the chiaroscuro drama and philosophical weight of a Schillerian play. In *Podrostok*, Dostoevsky tones down the excesses of his text, in both content and genre. He introduces moderation. This teenager is no Stavrogin. Makar is no Zosima. True, the plot derives from the standard tropes of the boulevard newspaper, but the novel's plot climaxes in a failed shooting in which two people are slightly wounded. Three suicides happen, but off-stage, and with few plot repercussions. Two threatened duels never happen. A pregnancy out of wedlock is the most *risqué* storyline – hardly the scandal of 'At Tikhon's.' In this landscape of hummocks and molehills, it is easy to get lost. When the terrain does throw up a feature – Makar's story, or Versilov's breakdown, it seems out of place in this rather humdrum

²² 'От многого отрекаюсь, что написал, особенно от тона некоторых фраз и страниц, но не вычеркну и не поправлю ни единого слова' (x:405).

universe, too weighty for its context, or too far from the disparate, fissile narrative which characterizes Arkady-as-narrator.

The absence, or at least quasiabsence, of excess is of some importance. While moderation is a logical way to address a broad and fragmented readership, it impedes discussion of issues of serious philosophical or ethical import. Prince Myshkin had demonstrated how such issues could only be addressed in a context of excess. Stavrogin experiences the same at Tikhon's. The Grand Inquisitor will require the fictional intensity of the Spanish Inquisition to contextualize his arguments. In *Podrostok's* lower voltage world, Makar's anecdotes will never equal Zosima's *zhitie*, just as Versilov's confession of philosophical faith will never match Dmitry's or Ivan's.

Being a Rothschild without the excess thus delivers, in the end, something which is recognizable, but measurably less than what was promised. Both Arkady and his narrative arguably suffer the same fate. No wonder Dostoevsky would revert to the more biddable world of mono-journalism for his next venture, *Dnevnik Pisatelya*. The impossible task of marrying predictable reader value and excess would have to wait for *Brat'ya Karamazovy*.

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Dostoevsky's Narrative Economy: Rainbow Bills in *The Brothers Karamazov*

In the preface to *The Brothers Karamazov* (1879–80), Dostoevsky's narrator issues a number of dubious temporal claims. He informs readers that this novel is but the first of two he plans to write about the same hero, Aleksei Fyodorovich Karamazov. Whereas the events of the first novel occurred "thirteen years ago" during the hero's youth, the second will witness his maturity in "our present, current moment" (14:6; 3–4).¹ Counting backward from 1879, when serial publication of the novel began, we might conclude that story we are about to read took place in 1866. As commentators have observed, however, Dostoevsky's novel feels closer to the time of its writing (1878–80) than the time of its fictional occurrence: it refers to historical events that took place after the mid-1860s, and it grapples with social and ideological questions that became pressing in the late 1870s.² The narrator's promised present and future prove similarly elusive: by the end of the first novel, Aleksei has turned out to be *a* rather than *the* hero, and of course, no second novel about him ever appeared.

This essay offers an economic interpretation of the conspicuous fictions that structure Dostoevsky's narrative. The preface certainly invites such a reading, as the narrator describes reading and writing in the language of economic transaction. He imagines readers will wonder why they should

¹ Fedor Dostoevskii, *Brat'ia Karamazovy*, in *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v tridsati tomakh* (hereafter *PSS*), vols. 14–15 (Leningrad: Nauka, 1976); Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, translated by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1990). All citations from *The Brothers Karamazov* in this essay refer to these editions and are given parenthetically throughout the text. I have modified Pevear and Volokhonsky's spelling of "rouble" to "ruble." When necessary for my analysis, I have made additional modifications to the translation and have indicated such changes. Unless otherwise noted, all other translations are my own.

² On the events and debates from the 1870s that Dostoevsky engages in the novel, see the commentary in *PSS*, 15:451.

“spend time” (“*tratit’ vremia*”) on the first novel, whether it will be “worth it” (“*stoiť li*”) to read the second one when it appears, and why the narrator has “spent [...] fruitless words and precious time” (“*tratil [...] besplodnye slova i dragotsennoe vremia*”) on the preface itself (14:5–6; 3–4, translation modified). These comparisons of reading and writing to spending rest on an unspoken equation of time, words, and money. Indeed, while not explicitly named here, money and its temporal logic both shape *The Brothers Karamazov* and problematize its value. As this essay will show, paper money in particular plays a crucial role in Dostoevsky’s narrative economy. I propose that the paper ruble’s history of endlessly deferred promises taught Dostoevsky something about how to write *The Brothers Karamazov*, and it may also teach us a new way to read it.³

In the preface, Dostoevsky’s narrator anticipates that readers will judge the value of his novel on the basis of the hero’s “noteworthiness” (“*primechatel’nost’* [‘]” 14:5; 3). While less obviously economic than its English translation or such Russian words as *tratit’*, *stoiť*, or *dragotsennoe*,

³ Money has proved a fruitful subject of inquiry in Dostoevsky studies, and my own thinking on the subject has been greatly enriched by such contributions as Jacques Catteau, *Dostoevsky and the Process of Literary Creation*, translated by Audrey Littlewood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 135–72; Boris Christa, “Dostoevskii and Money,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Dostoevskii*, William J. Leatherbarrow, ed., 93–110; Susan McReynolds, *Redemption and the Merchant God: Dostoevsky’s Economy of Salvation and Antisemitism* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2008); Sophie Ollivier, “Argent et Révolution dans *Les Démons*,” *Dostoevsky Studies* 5 (1984): 101–15; Jonathan Paine, “The Economy and the Print Market,” in *Dostoevsky in Context*, Deborah A. Martinsen and Olga Maiorova, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 66–74; Kirill Postoutenko, “Wandering as Circulation: Dostoevsky and Marx on the ‘Jewish Question.’” in *The Economy in Jewish History: New Perspectives on the Interrelationship between Ethnicity and Economic Life*, Gideon Reuveni and Sarah Wobick-Segev, eds. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2011), 43–61; Vadim Shneyder, “Myshkin’s Millions: Merchants, Capitalists, and the Economic Imaginary in *The Idiot*,” *The Russian Review* 77, no. 2 (2018): 241–58; William Mills Todd III, “Dostoevskii as a Professional Writer,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Dostoevskii* (2002), 66–92; Russell Scott Valentino, “What’s a Person Worth: Character and Commerce in Dostoevsky’s *The Double*,” in *American Contributions to the 13th International Congress of Slavists, Ljubljana, August 2003*, Robert A. Maguire and Alan Timberlake, eds., vol. 2 (Bloomington, IN: Slavica, 2003), 203–12; John Vernon, “On Borrowed Time: *The Gambler* and *La Cousine Bette*,” in *Money and Fiction: Literary Realism in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984), 108–41. For the particular approach to the subject I take in this essay, Valentino’s discussion of the promissory sensibility of Dostoevsky’s *The Double* and Vernon’s discussion of money and plot in *The Gambler* are especially important precedents. I also wish to thank discussant William Mills Todd III and all of the other members of the 2018 North American Dostoevsky Society panel at the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian studies conference as well as the reviewers for *Dostoevsky Studies* for their many valuable suggestions on earlier versions of this essay.

the word *primechatel'nost'* has economic connotations on the etymological level. According to the competing views of its origin summarized in Max Vasmer's *Etymological Dictionary of the Russian Language*, the verb *metit'*, from which *primechat'* and *primechatel'nost'* derive, comes either from an ancient Indian word for measure, and is therefore related to the Russian word *mera*, or else from a Gothic word meaning to cut or to hack, an action described in Russian by the word *rubit'*.⁴ Both of these proposed etymologies have a monetary ring. If all money serves as a unit of measure, Russian money announces itself as the product of cutting: the very name of the currency, the ruble, stems from the verb *rubit'*.

In this article, I wish to affirm the "noteworthiness" not of Aleksei, or Alyosha, as we come to know him, but of another hero of *The Brothers Karamazov*, to which he and his moral and spiritual values are repeatedly opposed, yet on which his character and his story depend. This hero (or anti-hero, as it were) is none other than the Russian ruble – not in the form of coins produced through cutting, but in the form of a specific denomination of credit bill, or *kreditnyi билет*, which, like *The Brothers Karamazov*, came into the world making strange claims on 1866. In that year, a new series of credit bills was designed for production according to improved methods of paper manufacture and printing. Due to the complexity of these new methods, however, the release of the bills was delayed. When they finally entered circulation some years later, the date of 1866 printed upon them was flagrantly false.

One denomination of the new bills merits special attention in connection with *The Brothers Karamazov*: the rainbow-colored 100, featuring a portrait of Catherine II (r. 1762–96) by Johann Baptist Lampi, Senior (1751–1830).⁵ A model of this type of bill is shown in figure 1 below. Its "noteworthiness" in Dostoevsky's novel will, I hope, become clear over the course of this essay.

⁴ Maks Vasmer, *Etimologicheskii slovar' russkogo iazyka*, s. v. "metit'."

⁵ Lampi made several portraits of Catherine II in preparation of a life-size painting he completed in 1794. Sources differ on this point, but to my eye, the engraving reproduced on the credit bills looks most similar to a version the State Hermitage Museum dates to 1793. "Lampi, Johann Baptist I. 1751–1838 (sic.). Portrait of Catherine II." The State Hermitage Museum, 1998–2018, accessed January 17, 2019. <<http://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/digital-collection/01.+paintings/38385>>.



Figure 1. 1866 model for a 100-ruble credit bill. Obverse (top) and reverse (bottom). The absence of the treasurer's signature on the obverse shows that this bill did not circulate. Photo courtesy of Aktsionernoe obshchestvo "Goznak."

This examination of Dostoevsky's last novel alongside the monetary texts circulating throughout it extends a line of argumentation from my book, *Economies of Feeling: Russian Literature under Nicholas I*, where I argue that the material history of Russian currency fostered Dostoevsky's aesthetic of fantastic realism.⁶ By "fantastic realism," I do not mean what Dostoevsky seems to have had in mind when he called himself a "realist in a higher sense," namely, his orientation toward spiritual concerns for which the materialist worldview generally associated with the realist novel cannot account.⁷ In my view, the term "fantastic realism" more usefully indicates another tendency, which I am not aware of Dostoevsky having acknowledged, but which, as Malcolm Jones has pointed out, is central to

⁶ Jillian Porter, *Economies of Feeling: Russian Literature under Nicholas I* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2017), esp. chapters 3 and 4, "Dostoevsky's Money" and "The Miser Never Dies," 88–106, 108–142.

⁷ Dostoevskii, *Dnevnik pisatel'ia* 1881, in *PSS* 27:65.

his writings: namely, the tendency to problematize the correspondence between signs and their referents.⁸

The particular episode in Russian monetary history I have so far implicated in this problematic correspondence is the replacement of Russia's first form of paper money, the *assignatsiia*, by the first series of credit bills in the mid-1840s. The *assignatsiia* itself had a history of highly questionable value. It was introduced in 1769 by Catherine II, whose portrait would first be monetized on the 100-ruble credit bills of 1866. Among other foreign innovations, Catherine II also introduced what would become a longstanding Russian tradition of using paper money to cover government expenses. Together with the state practice of issuing more bills than it could back with precious metals in the treasury, rampant counterfeiting (most famously by Napoleon's army) dramatically devalued the *assignatsiia* over the next several decades. This, in turn, led to the establishment of a dual monetary standard, according to which the nominal value of the paper ruble significantly exceeded its value in silver. The monetary reforms of 1839–43 sought to eliminate this double standard: the silver ruble became the sole monetary standard of the empire, and in 1843 the first credit bills were issued with the promise that their value would be equivalent to that of the silver rubles for which they could now be freely traded.

Dostoevsky's first published works of fiction – *Poor Folk* (*Bednye liudi*, 1846), *The Double* (*Dvoinik*, 1846), and "Mr. Prokharchin" (*Gospodin Prokharchin*, 1846) – register the young author's fascination with the ongoing spectacle of currency reform. At the time of their writing, the *assignatsii* were being recalled, destroyed, and replaced by the credit bills. In different ways and to different effects, Dostoevsky's first three works deploy unstable monetary signs as metaphors for what emerge as similarly problematic linguistic and literary signs.

Suggesting that the history of Russian currency would remain a shaping force of Dostoevsky's fictions throughout his career, this essay also shifts attention to the specifically temporal dynamics of Dostoevsky's narrative economy.⁹ Whereas *Economies of Feeling* explores analogies

⁸ Malcolm Jones offers this among other interpretations of fantastic realism in *Dostoyevsky After Bakhtin: Readings in Dostoyevsky's Fantastic Realism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), esp. 15.

⁹ Exploring connections between Russian currency and Dostoevsky's later novels, I follow the lead of Leonid Grossman, who points out the importance of the 1860s financial crisis and the appearance of new and unstable forms of currency to *Crime and Punishment*. "Gorod i liudi Prestupleniia i nakazaniia," in *Prestuplenie i nakazanie*, by F. M. Dostoevskii (Moscow: Goslitizdat., 1935), 5–52. 10.

Dostoevsky posits between paper money and words in *The Double* and between coins and character types in “Mr. Prokharchin,” in this reading of *The Brothers Karamazov*, I suggest that the paper ruble’s history of deferred promises helps to form the plot.

In 1843, the original credit bills were printed with the promise of convertibility: “Upon presentation of this bill the exchange Banks of the Expedition of Credit Bills promptly give a hundred rubles in silver or gold coin” (“*Po pred’iavlenii sego bileta nemedlenno vydaetsia iz razmennykh Kass Ekspeditsii Kreditnykh biletov sto rublei serebrianoi ili zolotoiu monetoiu*”).¹⁰ After honoring it for a time, the government decisively broke this promise in the late 1850s, after the expense of the Crimean War again prompted the proliferation of more bills than could be backed by precious metals.¹¹ After this point the promise of convertibility, which continued to be printed on the bills for decades, became an obvious lie. Moreover, counterfeiters continued to offer their own false promises, and by the early 1860s, the credit bills were repeating the *assignatsiia*’s history of devaluation, once again leading to price inflation and provoking a full-scale monetary crisis.

The government’s main strategies for shoring up the credit bills’ value included taking out foreign loans, and, in a gesture that evokes the 100,000 rubles in credit bills that miraculously survive the flames in Dostoevsky’s novel, *The Idiot* (*Idiot*, 1868–69), repeatedly rounding up large quantities of the bills and burning them.¹² These measures proved effective only in the short term, particularly as the government continued to print more paper money whenever it found itself in need. Much like Rogozhin and Nastasya Filipovna’s 100,000, the credit bills just wouldn’t burn.¹³ Indeed, by the late 1870s, the new war with Turkey prompted the government to increase the number of credit bills in circulation yet again, bringing the ever less

¹⁰ For images of pre-Revolutionary Russian paper money, see the photographs on unnumbered pages in A. E. Mikhaelis and L. A. Kharlamov, *Bumazhnye den’gi Rossii* (Perm’: Permskaia pechatnaia fabrika Goznaka, 1993) or the almanac released by the Russian Museum, *Kopeika rubl’ berezhet* (St. Petersburg: Palace Editions, 2017), 74–95.

¹¹ Mikhail Kashkarov, *Denezhnoe obrashchenie v Rossii* (St. Petersburg: Gos. tip., 1898), 1:179.

¹² Large numbers of *assignatsiia* and credit bills were burned in 1817, 1858, and 1863. A. Shipov, “Ob ustranении давления plutokratii (Okonchanie IV stat’i),” *Grazhdanin* 45 (Nov. 5, 1873), <http://philolog.petsu.ru/fmdost/grajdanin.html>, accessed November 29, 2018; *Entsyklopedicheskii slovar’* (St. Petersburg: Brokhgauz and Efron, 1890–1904), s. v. “kreditnyi bilet.”

¹³ Dostoevskii, *Idiot*, in PSS 8:145–6; Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Idiot*, translated by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (New York: Random House, 2003), 171–4.

valuable currency to the forefront of the public imagination precisely when Dostoevsky was writing *The Brothers Karamazov*.¹⁴

Like the credit bills that entice his characters and his readers, Dostoevsky's novel has a promissory quality, as seen in the preface. Other promises come throughout the novel, as when the narrator repeatedly assures readers that hidden truths will be revealed and the value of details will become clear later. In these moments, the narrator reaches forward to the future, binding and, indeed, indebting the future to the past. In his book, *Money and Fiction: Literary Realism in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*, John Vernon has assigned a similarly promissory – and indebting – role to money in the plots of European realism. While he focuses on novels, including Dostoevsky's *The Gambler* (*Igrok*, 1866), in which characters' own looming debts serve as an overarching plot structure, Vernon rightly points out that all paper money is a form of debt – a promise the government makes to pay the bearer in precious metals on demand.¹⁵ For my part, I want to stress that the history of Russian paper money would have made its status as a sign of repeatedly deferred debt especially apparent to Dostoevsky, whose last novel reads much like a credit bill. In this reading, Dostoevsky is the issuing authority, or bank; *The Brothers Karamazov* is the bill he issues to readers; and the delivery of final meaning, or value, is a payment in precious metals that is endlessly deferred.

Dostoevsky draws attention to the promissory character of his novel in his 1879 "Letter to the Publisher of *The Russian Messenger*." In this letter, which was published at Dostoevsky's request alongside an installment of his novel, the author regrets that although he had "given a firm promise" ("dal [...] tverdoe obeshchanie") to finish the novel by the end of the year, his health has made that impossible. He now "promise[s] to send without fail" the next installment in time for its release in January of 1880, and, after a break in February, to print the remainder of the novel without interruption (15:433–34). While it may seem intended to pacify the publisher and readers, who Dostoevsky implies have been offended by how long he has kept them waiting, when read against the text of the novel, this letter appears as yet another conspicuous performance of the deferred promises that structure the plot.

The novel issues promises all the way up through and including the epilogue. Echoing the narrator's assertions about the eventual revelation of

¹⁴ For brief treatments of the history of the credit bill and Dostoevsky's engagement with its devaluation in *The Brothers Karamazov*, see respectively *Entsyklopedicheskii slovar'*, s. v. "kreditnyi bilef"; commentary to *The Brothers Karamazov* in *PSS*, 15: 573.

¹⁵ Vernon, "On Borrowed Time," esp. 112, 117.

Alyosha's "noteworthiness" in the preface, the epilogue leaves readers with the image of Alyosha promising a group of young boys that the significance of all that has happened will become clear later on. "I give you my word," he says, promising his young disciples that he will always remember them and another boy, Ilyusha, who had recently died. Alyosha urges all the boys to follow his example so that one day this memory of love and fellowship might enable their "salvation." As the boys vow to do as Alyosha teaches, crying out, "We will, we will remember!" Alyosha issues the ultimate promise of reward to those who wait: one day, he assures them, they will all rise from the dead and be reunited in heaven (15:195–7; 774–6). Thus the epilogue promises an eventual spiritual recompense to Dostoevsky's characters and, by extension, his readers, who, like the boys of the epilogue, have been prepared by the foregoing to value Alyosha's teaching.

Throughout the novel itself, by contrast, most instances in which the narrator defers the revelation of meaning pertain to money. For example, after writing that Alyosha's eldest brother, Dmitry, desperately needs money, the narrator gestures to a future in which new information about this predicament will be revealed: "To anticipate (*Zabegaiu v pered*): the thing was that he perhaps knew where to get the money, he perhaps knew where it lay. I will not go into details just now, as it will all become clear later" (14:331; 336). Elsewhere, the narrator explains that Dmitry sells his watch for six rubles and borrows three rubles from his landlords. As if to justify his focus on such trivial details, the narrator states: "I note this fact beforehand (*Otmekchaiu etot fakt zaranee*); why I do so will become clear later" (14:337–8; 373–4). Similarly, of Dmitry pawning his pistols, we read: "In this way, again, the fact emerged that only three or four hours before a certain incident, of which I shall speak below, Mitya did not have a kopeck, and pawned his dearest possession for ten rubles, whereas three hours later he suddenly had thousands in his hands ... But I anticipate (*No ia zabegaiu v pered*)" (14:345; 382). These details do eventually pay off in the novel, becoming points of evidence against Dmitry in his father's murder trial. Yet the value of these payments is significantly compromised: the jury misreads the money and condemns an innocent man.

At the center of Dostoevsky's novel lies the promise of one type of money in particular: the rainbow-colored 100-ruble credit bill. Like the 1843 credit bills, those printed according to the 1866 model were color-coded on the obverse: yellow ones, green threes, blue fives, red tens, violet twenty-fives, grey fifties, and brown 100s. As the highest denomination, the 100 received special treatment in the form of a rainbow-colored reverse meant to be especially difficult to imitate. The refined designs of the 1866

bills also included more complex watermarks and, on the reverse of the higher denominations, portraits of Russian rulers made with a new metallographic technology: Dmitry Donskoy (r. 1359–89) on the five, Mikhail Fyodorovich Romanov (r. 1613–45) on the ten, Alexey Mikhailovich (r. 1645–76) on the twenty-five, Peter I (r. 1682–1725) on the fifty, and Catherine II on the 100.

Although he was abroad at the time, Dostoevsky was evidently aware of the new credit bills' release. While most of the new bills appeared in 1869, the twenty-fives began circulating in February of 1868.¹⁶ Dostoevsky mentions these new bills in a letter he wrote from Geneva the following month. Asking his friend A. N. Maikov to send him a twenty-five ruble note, he worries that local moneychangers may be unfamiliar with the new design: "They change our Russian credit bill here as well. But here's what: I think we now have new twenty-five ruble notes. I'm afraid they don't know them here yet. So it's better to send one of the old ones."¹⁷ This letter suggests that Dostoevsky's travel abroad actually heightened his attention to the currency transition underway at home. Like the moneychangers themselves, Dostoevsky and other travelers had to be savvy about the physical forms money takes and the conditions under which those forms had value.

In *The Idiot*, another reference to the new credit bills focuses attention on their unstable physical appearance. Prince Myshkin shows a twenty-five ruble note to Ferdysenko, who examines it in the light and wonders aloud, "Why do they turn brown? These twenty-fivers sometimes get terribly brown, while others, on the contrary, fade completely."¹⁸ This discussion of what may or may not have been a real manufacturing defect of the new bills reminds us yet again of Dostoevsky's interest in the currency transition underway. Although the prince does not answer Ferdysenko, and the subject of this particular bill is dropped from the novel, money's shifting embodiments of abstract value remain a mystery throughout the novel.

Reading *The Idiot* in the context of the rise of Russian investment capitalism in the 1860s, Vadim Shneyder has shown that the opposition between money as a material object and an abstract value is central to that novel's structure.¹⁹ For my part, I suggest that money's (im)materiality is a crucial source of narrative interest throughout Dostoevsky's oeuvre. In addition to the broader economic changes underway in Russia during the

¹⁶ Igor' Larin-Podpol'skii, *Vse den'gi Rossii: Monety, banknoty, bony: Bol'shaia illustrirovannaia entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Eksmo, 2019), 133–34.

¹⁷ Dostoevskii, letter to A. N. Maikov, March 21–22, 1868, old style, Geneva, in PSS 28.2:279.

¹⁸ Dostoevskii, *Idiot*, in PSS 8:79; *The Idiot*, 93.

¹⁹ Shneyder, "Myshkin's Millions," esp. 246–7, 252.

second half of the nineteenth century, the long and volatile history of Russian currency helps to explain this aspect of the writer's works. To be sure, this history predated the creation of Russian paper money. In a particularly spectacular example that haunts the very bill Ferdysenko studies, Alexei Mikhailovich, whose portrait was featured on the new twenty-fives, drastically devalued the copper coin of his realm by minting too much of it. This caused severe economic distress that culminated in a bloody uprising known as the Copper Riot of 1662.²⁰

While not unprecedented, Russia's currency troubles were exacerbated after the introduction of paper money, and the 1866 credit bills only continued this trend. The repeated issue of the new bills in ever greater excess of the government's metal reserve further eroded their value, and counterfeiters proved capable of copying most of them. The new fifty honoring Peter I, for instance, was so easy to counterfeit that it was retired after only one year. Thanks to the rainbow coloring that frustrated most forgers, the 100 was the most successful design. Thus Catherine II had the longest reign on the credit bill. Bills of the 1866 model were printed from 1866–1896, after which a new 100 appeared with her portrait both on the reverse and in a hidden watermark. By 1910, when a third version of the 100-ruble credit bill appeared with the same visible and invisible portraits of Catherine II, bills of this denomination had come to be known affectionately as *katen'ki* (little catherines).²¹ Like their 1843 predecessors, the 1866 100s were often called simply *raduzhnye* (rainbow-colored) or *raduzhki* (little rainbows). As a draft of Dostoevsky's novel confirms, however, they might also be called "catherines" (*ekateriny*) – a detail whose value will soon be revealed.

Catherine II was a fitting subject for the longest-lasting of the new bills: after all, she introduced paper money to Russia and initiated the devaluation that plagued it, with few interruptions, for decades to come. Even without her portrait on the 100, Dostoevsky would have known that the questionable value of the credit bills was Catherine II's legacy. Indeed, in

²⁰ Vissarion Belinsky discusses this event in a pair of essays published in 1841 under the title "Rossiia do Petra Velikogo." V. G. Belinskii, *Sobranie sochinenii v 9-i tomakh* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1976–82); 5:91–152, 113.

²¹ Intriguingly, the 1910 *katen'ki* and other imperial credit bills continued not only to circulate but also to be printed for several years after the 1917 Revolution. Mikhail Khodjakov, *Money of the Russian Revolution 1917–1920* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), esp. 68. On the cultural significance of money in the revolutionary period, see also Kirill Postoutenko, "Money and (Russian) Revolution: Why Cultural History Needs Its Own Theory of Money," in *Soviet Culture: Messages and Codes* (Munich: Sagner, 2010), 79–92.

1873, as editor of the weekly journal, *The Citizen (Grazhdanin)*. Dostoevsky published an article about the financial crisis, written by A. Shipov, which states:

The *assignatsii*, founded on government credit, represented, and even today represent under the name of credit bills, an excellent medium of exchange, and banks and credit institutions in general, taking in deposits and exchanging them for interest-bearing banknotes, served as a sponge, sucking up all the seemingly superfluous *assignatsii*, those unnecessary for the contemporary movement of trade. These are the characteristics of the *assignatsii* and deposit bank notes bequeathed to us by Catherine.

Ассигнации, основанные на государственном кредите, представляли, представляют и ныне, под названием кредитных билетов, отличное меновое средство, а банки и вообще кредитные учреждения, принимавшие вкладные суммы и выдававшие за них процентные билеты, являлись губкою, всасывающею все оказывающиеся излишними ассигнация, ненужными для современного торгового движения. Таковы свойства завещанных нам Екатериною ассигнаций и вкладных банковых билетов.²²

At issue here is not only the value of the paper money itself – whether the old *assignatsii* or the new credit bills – but what Shipov calls the government's "dual operation" ("*dvoinaia operatsiia*") of first issuing unbacked bills, then gathering those bills back unto itself by exchanging them for interest-bearing banknotes. In this way, the government could remove excess bills from circulation by essentially borrowing them from the people with the promise not just of some eventual repayment in metal money, but of immediate regular interest payments.²³ Shipov's article thus shows that simultaneously issuing and borrowing devalued currency was a publicly acknowledged state tradition dating back to Catherine II.

Given this tradition, the 1866 100-ruble credit bill featuring Catherine II's portrait stands out as an especially self-referential form of Russian paper money – a sign of the monetary sign's history of questionable value and deferred debt. For Dostoevsky, who generally viewed the introduction of foreign values to Russia with suspicion, the German-born empress's image could only have amplified the beguiling effect of the bills' promises to pay. Moreover, the rainbow design evokes all past and present incarnations of Russian paper money: it presents in one shimmer the full

²² I have modernized Shipov's orthography. "Ob ustraneniі davleniia plutokratov."

²³ Ibid.

spectrum of colors for which the *assignatsii* and credit bills were generally known. The self-referentiality of the 1866 100s is, I wager, why rainbow bills are the privileged form of currency in *The Brothers Karamazov*. Simultaneously asserting and undermining claims of value, scores of these bills move through the novel – some as shadowy facts, some as imaginary projections of the past or future.

Around the time in which the story begins, the old moneylender and tavern owner Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov changes 3,000 rubles into thirty “hundred-ruble notes” (“*sotennye kreditki*”) and hides them under his bed as a lure for Grushenka, a financial wheeler-dealer in her own right and a woman whom his son Dmitry also covets (14:111; 120). Although Dmitry has only fifteen 100-ruble notes, which are now described as “rainbow-colored” (“*raduzhnye*”), in his bloody hands on the day after his father’s murder, at least one witness imagines Dmitry is holding around twenty or thirty of them (14:359; 397 translation modified). This imaginatively inflated wad of bills becomes the most damning evidence against Dmitry at trial.

In fact, as the narrator hides from us until Book 9, Chapter 7, Dmitry’s 100s came not from his father but from his fiancé, Katerina Ivanovna, from whom he stole 3,000 rubles before blowing 1500 of it on a drunken spree with Grushenka. According to a shopkeeper who provisioned that spree as well as another that followed the murder, Dmitry paid with the same kind of bills both times: comparing the first spree to the second, the shopkeeper recalls that “he had a whole wad of rainbow-colored bills (*tselaia pachka raduzhnykh*) sticking out of his hand, just as now, and was throwing it around for nothing, without bargaining, without thinking and without wishing to think why he needed such a quantity of goods, wines, and so forth” (14: 364; 403, translation modified). And like the 1500 of the second spree, the first 1500 is incorrectly assessed by witnesses as amounting to 3,000. Thus the nominal value of these bills in the witness testimony and in the novel repeatedly exceeds their exchange value. It is a fantasy, much like the fantasmatic value of the Russian credit bills in general.

Fyodor Pavlovich’s missing 3,000 finally materialize when his illegitimate son and true murderer, Smerdyakov, pulls “three packets of rainbow-colored hundred-ruble credit bills” (“*tri pachki storublevykh raduzhnykh kreditok*”) out of his sock and hands them to Fyodor Pavlovich’s second legitimate son, Ivan (15:60; 624, translation modified). In this scene, Smerdyakov suddenly attains a significance – or value – that the narrator had previously denied him. Whereas the narrator had initially dismissed him as one of those “ordinary lackeys” with whom he is

"ashamed to distract [the] reader's attention," in the end Smerdyakov turns out to be the murderer – and to have the money – that the other characters and the readers have been seeking all along (14:93; 100). Strangely, having gotten away with both murder and theft, Smerdyakov forgoes the new life it might afford; he inexplicably hands the money over to Ivan and commits suicide. Ivan, in turn, presents the money at trial, but to no end: the jury accepts an imaginary 3,000 at the expense of the actual 3,000 before them. Again and again, value is revealed only to be dissolved, posited only to be problematized.

The novel thus takes shape through a kind of "dual [narrative] operation," whereby it alternately pays more or less than what is promised. Fyodor Pavlovich keeps the 3,000 promised to Grushenka secure in his bedroom while Katerina Ivanovna puts 3,000 into circulation. Once Katerina Ivanovna's 3,000 are largely dissipated, Fyodor Pavlovich's briefly re-enter circulation only to lose value and disappear again. Supporting this dual operation are a pair of scenes involving smaller sums of rainbow-colored bills that are similarly dispensed by Fyodor Pavlovich and Katerina Ivanovna. At issue in both scenes is the (un)enduring value of words, characters, and currency.

First, we learn that Fyodor Pavlovich shares the secret of his 3,000 rubles' whereabouts with Smerdyakov because the latter had once returned "three rainbow-colored notes" ("*raduzhnye bumazhki*") that Fyodor Pavlovich had dropped in the yard (14:116; 126, translation modified). As Smerdyakov's eventual murder of Fyodor Pavlovich confirms, this act gives both Fyodor Pavlovich and readers an inflated estimate of the young man's trustworthiness. Later, Katerina Ivanovna sends Fyodor Pavlovich's youngest son, Alyosha, to give two of the "rainbow-colored credit bills" ("*raduzhnye kreditnye bilety*"), which the narrator now specifies are "new" ("*noven'kie*"), to a man named Snegiryov, whom Dmitry has publicly humiliated in retribution for his reported attempt to sell to Grushenka some promissory notes Fyodor Pavlovich had earlier tricked Dmitry into signing (14:176, 190; 193, 209, translation modified). Like Smerdyakov, Snegiryov is a degraded character whose personal value is bound up with his handling of rainbow bills.

Snegiryov initially accepts the two rainbow-colored bills from Katerina Ivanovna with joy, but then, in a fit of pride, "he suddenly seized them in some kind of rage, crumpled them, and clutched them tightly in his fist" before finally throwing them on the ground and "trampling them with his heel," shouting "There's your money, sir! There's your money, sir! There's your money, sir! There's your money, sir!" Like the fire-proof bills in *The*

Idiot, these can weather abuse: when Alyosha retrieves them from the ground, they are “perfectly intact and crisp as new” (“*sovershenno tsely i dazhe zakhrusteli, kak noven'kie*,” 14:193; 212). As it turns out, Snegiryov’s pride cannot withstand the allure of this seemingly magical money: he accepts these bills the next day and additional sums from Katerina Ivanovna later on.

It is worth pointing out that in the scene of Snegiryov’s initial rejection of the money, Dostoevsky’s authorial focus on the materiality of the bills – their remarkably unalterable look and feel – runs counter to the emphasis his narrator and characters lay elsewhere on their abstract monetary value. Indeed, the nominal sum of three thousand rubles is uttered repeatedly as a kind of refrain throughout the novel. It is in this abstract form, or amount, that the characters invest their desires: Dmitry is desperate to repay Katerina Ivanovna the 3,000 he stole from her, and nothing indicates any preference he might have for repaying this “debt of honor” in rainbow-colored 100s or any other sort of currency (14:422; 468). Dmitry’s focus on the sum might appear only logical, given that it is the immaterial character of money – its representation of abstract, numerical value – that makes it money as such.

Nonetheless, in *The Brothers Karamazov*, the sum of 3,000 takes on a thoroughly illogical life of its own. Detaching from and surpassing both material reality and any rational calculation, it becomes a driving force of imagination and plot.²⁴ In a scene that especially reveals Dostoevsky’s interest in the financial crisis of his day as well as the growing importance of gold on world financial markets, the idea of the 3,000 that Dmitry owes Katerina Ivanovna is as if alchemically transformed into 3,000,000 rubles in gold. This occurs when Dmitry asks a wealthy visitor to the town, Madame Khokhlakov, for a loan of 3,000. She agrees to help him – not, as he assumes, by turning over the money, but rather by sharing the alternative “idea” that he become a goldminer. In this way, she says, he’ll get “not three thousand, but three million [...] and in no time!” (14:348; 385). According to Khokhlakov, this plan will benefit the fatherland as well as Dmitry: “You will become known and indispensable to the Ministry of Finance, which is in such need now. The decline of the paper ruble allows me no sleep, Dmitry Fyodorovich, few know this side of me” (14:349; 386). This comment reveals as much about Dostoevsky’s novel as it does about Madame Khokhlakov: the monetary crisis haunts both. Much like the

²⁴ Cf. Victor Terras, *Reading Dostoevsky* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), 136.

credit bills' promise of convertibility to metal money, here and elsewhere in the novel, the idea of money substitutes for its tangible value, and payments that seem to have been "promised" ("obeshchannye") are revealed as the stuff of fantasy (14:350; 388).

Dostoevsky's biography may offer a clue as to how the promise of precisely 3,000 rubles became a generator of such fantasies in *The Brothers Karamazov*. After his brother's death in 1865, Dostoevsky found himself solely responsible for the journal, *Epoch* (*Epokha*), which the two had been publishing. As the author's personal letters reveal, Dostoevsky blamed the monetary crisis for driving the journal into bankruptcy later that year.²⁵ Facing tens of thousands of rubles in debts, Dostoevsky took a risky loan for 3,000 from the unscrupulous book dealer F. T. Stellovsky. In return, Dostoevsky promised to write a new novel for Stellovsky to publish by November 1, 1866 with the stipulation that should the author fail to produce this novel, Stellovsky would obtain the right to publish Dostoevsky's works without remuneration for the next nine years.²⁶ What is more, according to Konstantin Mochulsky, Stellovsky actually paid Dostoevsky only a small portion of the 3,000 in cash. Most of the loan came in the form of promissory notes signed by an editor of Dostoevsky's own failed *Epoch*, which Stellovsky had been able to buy up "for a trifle."²⁷ Scholars have most frequently discussed this deal with Stellovsky in connection with *The Gambler*, which Dostoevsky managed to write for Stellovsky by the deadline. And yet *The Brothers Karamazov* shows that the promise of 3,000 rubles would produce Dostoevsky's fictions for decades to come.

Dostoevsky repeatedly stresses the discrepancy between the promise of 3,000 and its tangible reality in *The Brothers Karamazov*. As one of Dmitry's lawyers explains to the jury in the trial scene, the prosecutors' case against Dmitry rests on the unproven theory that he killed his father for the 3,000 that the old man had promised to give Grushenka: "Money, they say, was robbed – namely, three thousand rubles – but whether this money actually existed, nobody knows" (15:156; 729). Indeed, no 3,000 rubles were ever recovered that would prove Fyodor Pavlovich had that amount in his possession on the night of the murder: bills totaling only half that amount were found on Dmitry's person or were known to have been spent by him the following day. Attempting to direct the jury members'

²⁵ Dostoevskii, letter to A. E. Vrangeli, April 14, 1865, St. Petersburg, in PSS, 28.2:119.

²⁶ Joseph Frank, *Dostoevsky: A Writer in His Time* (Princeton University Press, 2012), 457.

²⁷ Konstantin Mochul'skii, *Dostoevskii: Zhizn' i tvorchestvo* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1947), 222; Konstantin Mochulsky, *Dostoevsky: His Life and Work*, translated by Michael A. Minihan (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967), 268.

attention away from the idea of the 3,000 to the physical evidence of the case, in other words, to pull them out of what he calls the “realm of novels,” the defense attorney recounts an anecdote about the murder of a cashier at a moneychanger’s shop in St. Petersburg (15:157; 730).

In that case, investigators were able to identify the murderer because the precise amounts of specific types of money found in his possession matched another shop employee’s description of the currency that had been taken: “how many rainbow-colored, blue, and red credit bills, how many gold coins and precisely which ones” (15:158; 731, translation modified).²⁸ In Dmitry’s case, by contrast, the physical evidence falls far short of the imaginary sum to which the jury nevertheless holds firm. Although he fails to convince the jury, the defense attorney offers readers compelling proof that the meaning of money in this novel is inseparable from its physical form.

The importance Dostoevsky assigns to specific forms of currency makes one omission from his novel all the more striking: while repeatedly stressing their rainbow coloring and their newness, neither the narrator nor the characters in the novel ever indicate whether the oft-mentioned 100s have Catherine II’s portrait upon them. This portrait would certainly be an anachronism in a novel taking place prior to 1869, when the first of these bills were printed.²⁹ Perhaps this is why Dostoevsky removed what is in fact a precise reference to Catherine II’s portrait in a draft version of the trial scene. In a note written on the margins of this draft, the investigator speaks of the “intoxicating effect” of “these rainbow bills, these tens of catherines” (“*eti raduzhnye, eti desiatki ekaterin,*” 15:304).

This draft description of the bills as “catherines” confirms that the 100-ruble credit bill of the 1866 model does inform the novel, supporting my claim to its “noteworthiness.” And yet the elimination of this description is also noteworthy. Cutting the precise reference to “catherines” from the final copy, Dostoevsky does more than safeguard the problematic claim his narrator makes to “thirteen years ago.” He turns this self-referential bill and, by association, all the forms of paper money handed down by Catherine II, all their incessant promises of value and deferrals of debt, into a ghost presence – a watermark, if you will – on the pages of *The Brothers Karamazov*.

²⁸ A similar murder was carried out in November of 1878 in St. Petersburg by a peasant named Zaitsev, whose trial was reported in the press in January of 1879. See the commentary in PSS 15:579, 600.

²⁹ According to a website for numismatists, the design of the new 100s was so complex that only a small number were printed in 1869; these bills therefore entered wide circulation only in 1872, when they were printed with that date upon them. “Gosudarstvennye kreditnye bilety 1866–1886,” Monety Rossii, 2013–2018, accessed January 20, 2019, <<http://moneta-russia.ru/paper/kreditnye-bilety-1866-1886.php>>.

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Current Bibliography 2018

Compiled and edited by June Pachuta Farris

The *Current Bibliography* attempts to be the most complete and up-to-date international bibliography of recent Dostoevsky research published. It has been the intention of the compilers that the *Current Bibliography*, when used as a supplement to the bibliographies in the preceding issues of the *Bulletin of the International Dostoevsky Society* (v. 1–9, 1971–1979) and *Dostoevsky Studies* (v. 1–9, 1980–1988; new series, v. 1–6, 1993–1998 in 3v. and new series, v. 2–21, 1998–2017) be as nearly inclusive as possible of all material published from 1970 through the current year. (With some exceptions, book reviews, reviews of theatrical productions and brief newspaper articles have been omitted.) It is our aim for the bibliography to be exhaustive. Consequently, the latest year is usually the least represented and the earlier years become more and more complete as time passes. In general, we can say that over a three-to-four-year period, the entries for the first of these years will be nearly complete. Every attempt has been made to provide full, clear citations, and a special effort has been made to keep together all citations by one author, disregarding the variations in spelling and transliteration which can occur when an author publishes in a variety of languages. Any additional information which is not a part of the citation itself, but which may provide clarification of the topic in relation to Dostoevsky, is given in brackets after the citation. Whenever possible, collections of essays have been fully analyzed, with individual citations provided for each article in the volume. The bibliography uses Library of Congress Romanization Tables to transliterate citations in non-Latin alphabets.

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[Ispoved' peterburgskogo mechatelia, pp. 3–48; *Belye nochi* v illiustratsiiakh Mstislava Dobuzhinskogo, pp. 51–76; Kommentarii k povesti *Belye nochi*, pp. 79–109. This is a companion volume to Dostoevskii, F. M. *Belye nochi: santimental'nyi roman (Iz vospominanii mechatelia)*: Illiustratsii M. V. Dobuzhinskogo. *Peterburgskaia letopis'*. SPb: Kuznechnyi pereulok, 2017. 106p.]

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BOOK REVIEWS ◇ REZENSIONEN

Н. В. Живолупова. *Проблема авторской позиции в исповедальном повествовании остоевского 60–70-х гг.* («Записки из подполья», «Подросток»): монография. Нижний Новгород: Издательство «Дятловы горы», 2017. 232 с.

В издании представлен текст кандидатской диссертации Н. В. Живолуповой и круг связанных с ней статей и тезисов докладов. Научное исследование было выполнено в начале 1980-х гг., что предопределило цели и задачи исследования, круг используемых источников. Тем не менее, монография не утратила своего научного значения. Ее издание, безусловно, актуально и значимо для сегодняшнего дня в истории литературоведения.

В центре анализа – проблема автора и художественных принципов воплощения авторской позиции в таких известных и в значительной степени изученных произведениях Ф. М. Достоевского, как «Записки из подполья» и «Подросток».

В плане подхода автор опирается на отечественную школу литературоведения: труды М. М. Бахтина, С. Г. Бочарова, В. В. Виноградова, Л. Я. Гинзбург, Г. А. Гуковского, Ю. М. Лотмана, Ю. Н. Тынянова и других. В работе Н. В. Живолупова понимает автора как «носителя взгляда на действительность, выражением которого является все произведение» (определение Б. О. Кормана). Исследовательница рассматривает проблему авторской позиции и проблему развития повествовательной формы «как диалектически связанные с точки зрения их взаимодействия в творческом процессе Достоевского» (с.11).

Н. В. Живолупова ставит задачу проанализировать художественные принципы выражения авторской позиции в произведениях, написанных в жанре «записок», т. е. с использованием формы повествования от лица героя (Ich-Erzählung) в зрелый период творчества Достоевского, когда «при стабильности философской проблематики в каждом из пяти больших романов мы видим новации повествовательной формы» (с.12). «Записки из подполья» и «Подросток» Н. В. Живолупова относит к типу «исповеди героя, взятого автором в качестве объекта исследования; позиция героя корректируется автором или противопоставляется авторской» (с.13). В рамках монографии решается вопрос об эволюции форм повествования от «Записок из подполья» к «Подростку», о средствах

выражения авторской оценки субъекта исповеди (так, рассматриваются в исследовании в оценочном плане художественные способы создания автопортрета, автохарактеристики, тона повествования, литературные реминисценции, сюжета).

Соответственно выстраивается и структура монографии. В ней (кроме введения и заключения) три главы: «Эволюция исповедальной формы в творчестве Достоевского 60-х годов», «Проблема авторской позиции в *Записках из подполья*», «Проблема авторской позиции в исповедальной форме романа *Подросток*». Важным, представляется, отметить, тонкий анализ исследовательницы текстов произведений, позволяющий разграничить позиции автора и героя, показать средства воплощения авторской модальности в поэтике произведения, написанных от лица героев. Так, при анализе принципов авторской позиции в «Записках из подполья», в частности, тона повествования, Н. В. Живолупова пишет: «Признаваемая Достоевским безошибочность нравственного чувства нигде в исповеди парадоксалиста не называется им, не включена в его сознание и проявляется лишь как бессознательное в нем, в виде эмоций, которые им называются, но причина которых ему не ясна. [...] Тон героя, проявляющийся в повествовании как бессознательное, эмоция может в *Записках из подполья* получать оценочную функцию благодаря особому представлению автора о человеке, о соотношении „рассудочного“ в нем с „натурой человеческой ... целиком“, со всем „сознательным и бессознательным“ (V, 115), что в ней есть (это соотношение в *Записках из подполья* в самом общем смысле проявляется как противопоставление идеи „живой жизни“)» (92–93). При анализе авторских принципов в повествовательной стратегии романа «Подросток» Н. В. Живолупова показывает, как работает эта же авторская установка в изображении слова молодого героя Достоевского: «Ограниченность кругозора рассказчика выкупается для Достоевского постоянным присутствием в задуманном им типе повествования единого нравственного подхода к изображаемому. „Наивность“, „неспелость“ Подростка создает чистоту нравственного чувства и, следовательно, по Достоевскому, верность нравственной оценки происходящих событий, непредвзятый взгляд на мир. Тезис Достоевского о том, что „можно ошибиться в идее, но нельзя ошибиться сердцем“, приводит его в 70-е годы к созданию в повествовании особого положительного центра, безошибочности нравственного „чутья“ Подростка (что было воспринято Н. А. Некрасовым как необыкновенная „свежесть“ самой стихии рассказывания).

[...] Именно как носитель верной нравственной оценки Подросток и может быть, по замечанию Достоевского, главным героем романа» (с. 147). Эволюция принципов воплощения авторской позиции от «Записок из подполья» к «Подростку» предопределена, с одной стороны, временем их создания, с другой стороны – жанровой спецификой. В «Подростке» границы исповедальной формы расширяются: «События романа даны не в кругозоре одного, а как бы в их истинной характерности, как черты описываемого мира. В то же время исповедь Подростка необходима писателю в его романе для создания положительного „нравственного центра“ не просто в герое (как это было в *Идиоте*), но в самом повествовании» (с. 170).

В целом, в работах, представленных в книге Н. В. Живолуповой «Проблема авторской позиции в исповедальном повествовании Достоевского 60–70-х гг. (*Записки из подполья, Подросток*)», на основе наработок отечественной филологической школы разрабатываются научный подход и авторская методология в решении актуальной как в прошлом, так и в настоящем проблемы воплощения авторской позиции в художественных произведениях Ф. М. Достоевского, написанных в исповедальной форме записок, от лица героя.

А. В. Тоичкина

Санкт-Петербург

Andreas Guski: *Dostojewskij. Eine Biographie*. Mit 50 Abbildungen. München: C. H. Beck 2018. 460 S.

Noch eine Dostojewskij-Biographie? Wo doch schon so viele im deutschen Sprachraum auf dem Markt sind? 1925 erschien „Das Leben Dostojewskijs“ von Karl Nötzel, 1952 „Dostojewskij. Menschengestalter und Gottsucher“ von Zenta Maurina, 1992 „Dostojewskij. Sträfling, Spieler, Dichterfürst“ von Geir Kjetsaa, 2013 „Fjodor M. Dostojewski. Sträfling, Spieler, Seelenforscher“ von Rainer Buck. Auch die 1981 erschienenen Dokumente zu „Dostojewskij in der Schweiz“, herausgegeben von Ilma Rakusa unter Mitwirkung von Felix Philipp Ingold, sind ganz dem biographischen Kontext gewidmet.

Worin aber besteht das Besondere dieser neuen Dostojewskij-Biographie von Andreas Guski? Die Antwort muss lauten: Sie ist die einzige, die mit der russischen Chronik von Leben und Werk Dostojewskijs in drei Bänden systematisch und im Detail konkurrieren kann: „Letopis’ zhizni i tvorcestva

F. M. Dostoevskogo“ (Sankt-Peterburg: Izdatel'stvo „Akademicheskij projekt“ 1994).

Die Reaktion von Leben und Werk auf die maßgebenden Faktoren des Zeitgeistes werden von Guski im Detail vor Augen geführt, wobei das Leben des Autors im Vordergrund steht, ohne dass dabei die dogmatische Sicht eines Karl Marx oder eines Sigmund Freud in Anschlag gebracht würde.

Die Rolle des Geldes in Leben und Werk Dostojewskijs wird sorgfältig und ausführlich herausgearbeitet. „Geld ist geprägte Freiheit“, das wußte Dostojewskij bereits im siirischen Zuchthaus.

Im Spielkasino Baden-Baden hat er dann immer wieder größere Summen verloren und fusionierte diese Erlebnisse zu seinem Roman „Der Spieler“. Raskolnikow in „Schuld und Sühne“ will durch einen Raubmord reich werden; und die Handlung der „Brüder Karamasow“ kreist um dreitausend Rubel, die schließlich bei Smerdjakow gefunden werden, obwohl die zwölf Geschworenen Dmitrij Karamasow für den Täter halten.

Die Konstruktion der Monographie lässt ihr System erkennen:

1. Aufbrüche und Abstürze (1822–1849), 2. Das erste Exil: Sibirien (1850–1859), 3. Literarische Auferstehung (1860–1867), 4. Das zweite Exil: Europa (1867–1871), 5. Ankünfte (1871–1876), 6. Auf dem Gipfel (1876–1881). Auf diese Weise werden Leben und Werk Dostojewskijs in der ihnen eigenen Dynamik erfasst: als Weg nach oben, wobei das Leben die Messlatte liefert: vom Totenhaus zum Propheten der christlichen Zukunft Russlands auf dem Boden der russischen Orthodoxie, die den Antisemitismus auf natürliche Weise impliziert.

Mit besonderer Aufmerksamkeit werden die drei großen Lieben Dostojewskijs geschildert: die Ehe mit Marja Isajewa, die Beziehung zu Polina Suslowa und die zweite Ehe mit Anna Snitkina. Ein Leben, das selber in seiner abenteuerlichen Vielfalt wie ein Roman „gelesen“ werden kann.

Die sprachliche Gestaltung des Ganzen besitzt durchgehend regelrecht literarische Qualitäten. Man denke nur an die Überschriften „Das Imperium schlägt zurück“ (zur Festnahme Dostojewskijs im Jahre 1849) und „Tod und Verklärung“ (zum Tod Dostojewskijs im Jahre 1881).

Zusammenfassend lässt sich sagen: Mit seiner Monographie hat Andreas Guski dem Leser von heute den adäquaten „Türöffner“ zu Leben und Werk Dostojewskijs bereitgestellt und ist damit. unbestrittener Testsieger in Anschaulichkeit und Begriffsschärfe. Etwas Besseres kann nicht gefunden werden.

OBITUARY ♦ NACHRUF

June Pachuta Farris
1947–2018

Bibliographer for Slavic and East European Studies
(*Dostoevsky Studies* Bibliographer, 1984–2018)

June Pachuta Farris was valued and recognized by scholars and librarians throughout the world for her expertise as a bibliographer in Slavic and East European Studies and for the generosity she demonstrated throughout her decades of service to the profession. She died on July 27 after a short illness at age 70.

June served the University of Chicago for more than three decades, most recently holding the title of Bibliographer for Slavic and East European Studies and General Linguistics. “We are deeply saddened by June’s passing,” said Brenda Johnson, Library Director and University Librarian at the University of Chicago. “June was a dedicated librarian who built one of the finest Slavic and East European Studies collections in the world. She was a wonderful colleague, both to us at Chicago and to the Slavic librarian community.”

In 2012, the Association for Women in Slavic Studies (AWSS), an affiliate of the Association for Slavic, East European & Eurasian Studies (ASEEES), recognized June with its Outstanding Achievement Award. “The entire profession has been enriched by June’s unassuming yet dedicated commitment to helping scholars wherever they work – whether formally, through her many published bibliographies on subjects as diverse as Dostoevsky and Czech and Slovak émigrés, or informally through her willingness to respond to countless queries from individuals,” the Association noted. June was widely known for her quarterly and annual “Current Bibliography on Women and Gender in Russia and Eastern Europe,” which began appearing in the AWSS newsletter in 1999. She also collaborated with Irina Livezeanu, Christine Worobec, and Mary Zirin, on a two-volume publication, *Women and Gender in Central and Eastern Europe, Russia, and Eurasia: A Comprehensive Bibliography* (2007), considered an invaluable resource in the field. Earlier this year, June

learned that she is to be further recognized by the ASEES at its December meeting as the 2018 recipient of the Distinguished Service Award from its Committee on Libraries and Information Resources.

June earned a BA in Russian and French from Case Western Reserve University; an MA in Russian Language and Literature from Ohio State University, writing a thesis on “The Concepts of Metaphysical Rebellion and Freedom in Dostoevsky and Camus,” and an MA in Library Science from University of Denver. She served as Slavic Reference Librarian and Assistant Professor of Library Administration at the University of Illinois, before coming to Chicago in 1986.

June spoke French, Russian, and Czech fluently and was conversant with most Slavic languages as well as Greek. She also had a great love of musical theater and had memorized all the lyrics to a large number of shows, both old and new.

Sandra Levy, Associate Slavic Librarian, who worked closely with June for the 28 years since she was hired at Chicago in 1989, first met June even earlier, in the 1970s, when Sandra was a graduate student visiting the University of Illinois, where June was beginning her library career. June began answering reference questions and mentoring Sandra even then. “It’s who she was,” Sandra said. “It wasn’t just that she was a mentor to me – she was a mentor to everyone.” Sandra has received an outpouring of tributes from Slavic librarians who shared this experience: “June would tackle each and every reference question as if it were the most important question in the world.”

An additional note of thanks to June Pachuta Farris from the International Dostoevsky Society.

Members of the International Dostoevsky Society and Dostoevsky scholars around the world will be forever grateful to June for over 34 years of extraordinary service. When the Bibliography was added to *Dostoevsky Studies* in 1984 (Volume 5), June was part of the team that compiled it. By 1986 (Volume 7), June was the Bibliography’s sole compiler and remained so until her death in 2018. The Bibliography in this issue is thus the last prepared by June, a brilliant star in the firmament of Dostoevsky studies.

Deborah A. Martinsen
(IDS President, 2007–2013)

Columbia University, New York

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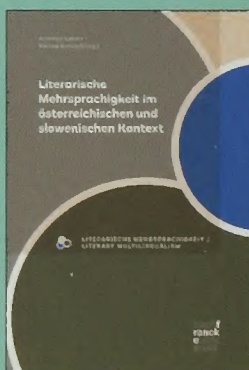
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